

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

HISTORY
of the
CITY
of
NEW YORK

by

MARTHA J. LAMB

and

Mrs. BURTON HARRISON

VOL. II

GRAD
F
128.3
.L22
1910
v.2

Digitized by Google



Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

History of the City of New York.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

HISTORY

OF THE

CITY OF NEW YORK:

ITS ORIGIN RISE, AND PROGRESS.

BY

MRS. MARTHA J. LAMB

AND

MRS. BURTON HARRISON.

Illustrated.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

NEW YORK:
THE A. S. BARNES COMPANY.

Hosted by Google

Grad
F
128.3
L22
1910
v. 2

Copyright, 1877, 1880, 1896, *by A. S. Barnes & Co.*

Hosted by Google

grad
10696893
lost
10/16/01
repl
add

PREFACE.

THESE volumes form a distinct work in themselves. The immense wealth of interesting material, necessarily excluded from their strictly prescribed limits, suggests other volumes in the future. Elaboration of special subjects, and the picture of the last half-century illumined with the electric light of detail, are among the possibilities. Such a series would form a natural sequel, but in no wise affect the individuality of this work.

The career of New York is irresistibly attractive during the century embraced in the second volume, now complete in uniform size with its predecessor. Had it been otherwise my enthusiasm must have waned under the severity of application needful for the perfect drilling and disciplining of raw material into unity and felicity of arrangement. The issue of my first volume two years since, and the unqualified approval it elicited from all sources, inspired me with fresh courage; but the inherent magnetism and vitality of the subject itself has been the secret of my success. The pressure to complete the undertaking has never for a moment been lifted since its inception. Had I foreseen its magnitude I should have been appalled. Its importance justified comprehensive research at every step. Thus the structure became a matter of growth instead of architecture. I have done what I could to learn the truth. No one authority has been accepted and followed in any instance without further evidence; and where accounts have conflicted I have sought and secured every book and document relating to the subject, of which I could obtain any knowledge, even if no more than one of my paragraphs was involved in the issue.

Hosted by Google

It has been my intention to collect under one view the almost countless authorities from which I have derived aid. But the extreme difficulty of assigning a proper measure to such catalogue, and the absolute want of space for its insertion, deprive me of the coveted pleasure. It would be useful to the student; and yet it would give a totally inadequate notion of the vast extent of the field in which I have been gleaning. Some of the choicest links in my chain have been found in the most out-of-the-way places — among seared and yellow letters written by actors in the great events narrated, in old sermons, records of trials, wills, genealogical manuscripts, documents, and pamphlets; while concerning certain matters tinged with ambiguity and uncertainty, I have discovered extraordinary and unique sources of authentic infor ıation outside of the city and State.

To the various New York families who have constantly and courteously given me access to private-libraries and valuable family manuscripts — more precious than diamonds; to the historians and scholars who have kindly and uniformly extended assistance whenever I have sought information; to the learned and courteous librarians of the Congressional Library at Washington, the Library of the Department of State, the Library of Yale College in New Haven, and of the New York Society, the Astor, the Mercantile, and the Historical Libraries of our own city, I cannot express too warmly my grateful acknowledgments. The extensive historical knowledge of Mr. William Kelby of the Library of the New York Historical Society deserves special mention; and his prompt, untiring, and priceless services in making investigations and in suggesting new and various sources of information, courteously rendered on all desired occasions, through a period covering fourteen years, command my cordial recognition.

In closing my second volume I can reiterate with emphasis the sentiment expressed in the final paragraph of my former and more general preface — in the full confidence that this contribution to the intelligence of the people of one of the most interesting cities in the world will be generously appreciated.

MARTHA J. LAMB.

NEW YORK CITY, December, 15, 1880.

Hosted by Google

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER XXVI.

City Improvements. — The First Quarantine. — Trinity Church. — Adolphe Philipse. — The Disfranchisement of the Jews — Political Throes. — Judge Lewis Morris. — John Cruger. — Daniel Horsemanden. — Political Parties. — The New Market-House in Broadway. — The De Lancey Mansion. — Death of Mr. Clarke. — The Negro Plot. — Burning of the Governor's House in the Fort. — Mary Burton. — Wholesale Alarm. — The Common Council. — Burning at the Stake. — Hanging. — Transportation of Convicts — Day of Public Thanksgiving. — The Yellow Fever in New York — Dr. Colden's Medical Treatise. — Governor George Clinton. — The Warren Family. — Mansion of Admiral Sir Peter Warren. — Sir William Johnson. — The Indians. — The French. — The Conquest of Louisburg. — Sir William Pepperell. — Admiral Sir Peter Warren. 571 - 596

CHAPTER XXVII.

Philip Livingston. — Philip Livingston's Sons. — William Livingston. — Philip Livingston's Daughters. — Philip Livingston's Death. — John Rutherford. — The Indian Conference of October, 1745. — Frederick Philipse. — The Philipse Family. — Philipse Manor. — Mary Philipse. — Clinton and the Assembly. — Preparations for the Canadian Campaign. — Indian Conference of 1746. — Horrors of War. — Chief Justice De Lancey. — Dr. Colden. — Violent Contests. — New York under Discipline. — A Glimpse of New York in 1752. — The Odd Wedding. — Rev. Aaron Burr. — Sir Danvers Osborne. — Statesmanship of Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey. — The Albany Congress. — King's College. — William Livingston. — The Great Feud. — New York Society Library. — Governor Sir Charles Hardy. — The French War. — General Braddock. — Washington. — War. — Acadia. — Hon. John Watts. — The Watts Estate. — The Watts Mansion. — Archibald Kennedy. — No. 1 Broadway. 597 - 656

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Letter of James Alexander. — Shirley in Boston. — Victory of the People of New York. — Declaration of War. — The Earl of Loudoun. — Mayor John Cruger. — New York Oppressed. — Boundary Jangles. — Riots at Livingston Manor. — Governor Hardy resigns. — Benjamin Franklin. — The Immortal Kite. — The Postal Routes of America. — Loss of Fort William Henry. — Loudoun and his Cabbages. — Recall of Loudoun. — Changes in the English Ministry. — Capture of Fort Du Quesne. — Defeat and Recall of Abercrombie. — General Wolfe. — Capture of Quebec. — General Amherst. — William Walton. — The Walton House. — Death of Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey. — Dr. Cadwallader Colden Lieutenant-Governor of New York. — Governor Monckton. — Death of George II. — George III. — The Earl of Bute. — Resignation of Pitt. — Sandy Hook Lighthouse. — Sir James Jay. — The Jay Family. — John Jay in College. — Conquest of Havana. — Treaty of Peace. — England in Triumph 657 - 698

CHAPTER XXIX.

Opinions of French Statesmen. — Boundary Disputes. — Hon. James Duane. — Indians on the War-Path. — English Language in the Dutch Church. — The Middle Dutch Church. — The German Reformed Church. — The New Jersey Lawyers. — Lord Grenville. — Stamped Paper. — New York Impatient of Control. — First Committee of Correspondence. — Lieutenant-Governor Colden. — Right of Appeals. — Barré Speech. — Passage of the Stamp Act. — Sons of Liberty. — Rev. Stephen Johnson. — Resignation of Stamp Officers. — The Stamp Act Congress. — Arrival of Stamps. — The Non-Importation Agreement. — Stamp Act Riot. — Victory of the People. — Sir Henry Moore. — Debates in Parliament. — Repeal of the Stamp Act. — New York denounced as Rebellious. — New York Disfranchised. — Boston in Trouble. — The Founding of the Chamber of Commerce. — Repeals. — Tax continued on Tea. — Death of Sir Henry Moore. — Emissions of Bills of Credit. — Violent Excitement 699 - 747

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXX.

Condition of New York in 1770. — Divisions among the People. — The Livingston and De Lancey Families. — Religious and State Matters. — The Churches of New York in 1770. — The Pastors. — Resentment of Boston when New York resumed Commercial Intercourse with England. — Reply of the New York Merchants. — Two Years' Tranquility. — The Earl of Dunmore. — Sir William Tryon. — The Court End of the Town. — Brief Allusion to the Location of the Dwellings of some of the Leading Families of the City. — A Glimpse of the Sugar-Houses. — Distress of the East India Company. — Act of Parliament to force the Colonies to buy Tea. — The Boston Tea Party. — The New York Tea Meeting. — New York sending back the Tea Vessels. — The Boston Port Bill. — Sympathy of the Colonies. — The Committee of Fifty-One. — New York proposes a Continental Congress. — Various Exciting Events. — The Delegates to the Continental Congress. — Action of the Continental Congress of 1774. — The New York Committee of Observation. — Provision for the Immortal Congress which declared the Independence of America 748 - 768

CHAPTER XXXI.

Various Currents of Human Thought. — Conflicting Opinions in England. — Petition of the Continental Congress. — Chatham's Argument. — The Ministry Courting New York. — Death of Sir William Johnson. — Indian War on the Ohio River. — Action of the New York Assembly. — New York Republican in Sentiment. — Action of the Committee of Sixty. — The Revolutionary Convention. — Delegates to the Second Continental Congress. — The Tree of Freedom. — News of the Battle of Lexington. — The Royal Government powerless in New York. — The Committee of One Hundred. — Republicanism. — President Myles Cooper of King's College. — John Holt, the Printer. — Capture of Ticonderoga. — The New York Congress. — The Battle of Bunker Hill. — Washington in New York. — The Asia. — Condition of the City. — Exploit of Isaac Sears. — General Philip Schuyler. — General Richard Montgomery. — The Invasion of Canada 11 - 55

CHAPTER XXXII.

The New Year. — New York Active, but Cautious. — Governor Franklin of New Jersey in Custody. — Burning of Portland, Maine. — Burning of Norfolk, Virginia. — Families divided and Friends at Enmity. — New York disarms the Tories on Long Island. — The Pamphlet "Common Sense." — Sir John Johnson surrenders to Schuyler. — Lee's Arrival in New York. — General Clinton's Arrival in New York. — The Panic. — Lord Stirling in Command of New York. — General Israel Putnam. — Escape of Hon. John Watts — Fortifications. — The British Army driven from Boston. — Washington transfers the American Army to New York. — Silas Deane sent to the French King for Help. — Canada's Commissioners. — The Third New York Congress. — Alexander Hamilton. — The Conspiracy. — Riots and Disturbances. — British Fleet off Sandy Hook. — Governor William Livingston. — Liberty Hall. — The Continental Congress. — Declaration of American Independence 56 - 91

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Independency proclaimed. — The New York Convention at White Plains. — Reading of the Declaration at City Hall in Wall Street. — Hostile Ships sail up the Hudson. — Agitation of the City. — Arrival of Lord Howe. — Intercourse with Washington. — Army Officers. — Battle of Long Island. — The Defeat. — The Retreat. — The Conference. — Evacuation of the City. — Occupation by the British. — Battle of Harlem Heights. — The Great Fire of 1776. — The March to White Plains. — Advance of the British. — Battle of White Plains. — Washington's Change of Position. — Death of Colden. — Capture of Fort Washington by the British. — Disasters. — March through New Jersey. — General Charles Lee. — Crossing the Delaware. — Capture of Trenton by Washington. — The New York Prisons. — Condition of the American Army 92 - 151

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Money. — Victory at Princeton. — Startling Achievements. — New Jersey reconquered by Washington. — Army at Morristown. — Lord Stirling. — Raids. — Burning of Danbury. — Storming of Sag Harbor. — Capture of General Prescott. — Constitution of New York. — Augustus Jay. — Battle of Scotch Plains. — Fall of Ticonderoga. — Battle of Oriskany. — Battle of Bennington. — Discussions in Parliament. — Lafayette. — The New Jersey Gazette. — Opening of the Supreme Court of New York. — Battle of the Brandywine. — Fall of Philadelphia. — Battles of Saratoga. — Battle of Germantown. — Burning of Kingston. — Surrender of Burgoyne. — Valley Forge. — West Point 152 - 191

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXXV.

Parliament. — The French Alliance. — Camp at Valley Forge. — Baron Steuben. — Gardiner's Island. — General Howe superseded by Sir Henry Clinton. — The Battle of the Kegs. — Evacuation of Philadelphia by the British. — Battle of Monmouth. — General Lee. — Arrival of the French Fleet. — Destruction of Wyoming. — New York City under the British. — The Prisons. — Citizens. — Colonel Ludington. — Forays in all Directions from New York City. — Dr. John Cochrane. — Winter-Quarters. — Washington in Philadelphia. — The Verplanck Mansion. — Condition of the City of New York. — New Haven attacked. — Burning of Fairfield. — Burning of Norwalk. — Storming of Stony Point. — Paulus Hook. — Sullivan's Expedition against the Indians. — The Southern Army. — Newport. — Washington at Morristown 192 - 229

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Significance of Events. — New York City in 1780. — Forays into New Jersey. — Camp Life at Morristown. — Alexander Hamilton. — Elizabeth Schuyler. — Arnold under a Cloud. — Return of Lafayette. — Capture of Charleston. — Burning of Connecticut Farms. — Battle of Springfield. — Sir Henry Clinton at Easthampton. — Treason of Arnold. — Aaron Burr. — Execution of André. — Unpopularity of the War in England. — Correspondence of Hartley and Franklin. — The French Army. — Count Rochambeau. — Washington at Dobb's Ferry. — The Conflict at the South. — Burning of New London. — Surrender of Lord Cornwallis. — Marauding Parties — Sir Guy Carleton. — Peace Negotiations. — Suspension of Hostilities. — Signing the Definitive Treaty of Peace. — David Hartley. — The Circinnati. — The Evacuation of the City of New York by the British. — Grand Entry of the American Army 230 - 274

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The Return of New York Families. — Desolation. — Rev. Dr. John Rodgers. — Churches. — Rutgers College. — Rev. Dr. Hardenbergh. — Washington parting with his Officers. — Washington's Resignation of Authority. — James Duane appointed Mayor of the City. — The Mayor's Court. — Richard Varick. — The New York Legislature. — Old Morrisania. — The Morris Family. — The Loyalists. — Confiscation Acts. — The Chamber of Commerce Reorganized. — Schools. — First Regents of the University of New York. — Columbia College — Newspapers. — First City Directory. — Political Throes. — Weakness of the Government. — Citizens. — Banking Interests. — Counterfeit Money. — The De Lanceys. — The Livingstons. — The Lawyers of the City 275 - 300

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Wall Street in 1787. — Diplomatic Entertainments. — Social Affairs at the Capital. — Clerical Characters. — Medical Celebrities. — The City Hospital. — The Doctors' Mob. — Residences. — The Two Political Parties in New York. — Alexander Hamilton. — The Insurrection in Massachusetts. — Representative Men of the Convention. — The Federal Principle. — Framing the Constitution. — Gouverneur Morris. — The Adoption of the Constitution by the States. — Action of New York. — The Federal Celebration. — New York City. — Federal Hall in Wall Street. — The Presidential Residence. — Postmaster-General Osgood. — The Election of a President. — The First Congress under the Constitution. — Arrival of Washington in New York City. — The Inauguration. — The First Cabinet. — The Inauguration Ball. — The Festivities of the Capital. — Social Celebrities. — Members of Congress. — Progress of the City 301 - 350

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

FULL-PAGE ENGRAVINGS.

	Page
Sir William Johnson's Dream	588
De Lancey and Livingston	644
Founding of Chamber of Commerce	740
The Great Tea Meeting (1773)	763
News of Battle of Lexington in New York City	21
Reading of Declaration of Independence at City Hall in Wall Street	93
Richmond Hill House	117
Adoption of the Constitution of State of New York	162
Washington reconnoitering New York from Opposite Shore of the Hudson	254
Signing of the Definitive Treaty	267
Adoption of the Federal Constitution	325

ILLUSTRATIONS IN TEXT.

		Page
1.	Trinity Church, 1737	572
2.	Plan of Fort George	579
3.	Sir Peter Warren's House	588
4.	Portrait of Mary Philipse	600
5.	Roger Morris Mansion	605
6.	The De Peyster Mansion	628
7.	St. George's Chapel, 1752	632
8.	The Royal Exchange	634
9.	King's College	646
10.	Kennedy Mansion, No. 1 Broadway	665
11.	Fraunces Tavern	657
12.	Mayor John Cruger	662
13.	Colonel Peter Schuyler	672
14.	The Assault on Quebec	681
15.	Walton House in 1760	684
16.	Sandy Hook Lighthouse	695
17.	Van Cortlandt Mansion, Kingsbridge	697
18.	Middle Dutch Church	704
19.	Portrait of Cadawallader Colden	712
20.	Fac-simile of Placard	724
21.	Specimen of Stamps	726
22.	Residence of Hon. John Watts, No. 3 Broadway	732
23.	St. Paul's Chapel	742
24.	Specimen of Bills	745
25.	North Dutch Church	750
26.	Seal and Autograph of Governor Tryon	756
27.	Interior of the great Historic Room in Fraunces Tavern	759
28.	Portrait of General Philip Schuyler	17
29.	Clinton Arms	20
30.	Holt's Snake Device	28
31.	Portrait of Wynant Van Zandt	33
32.	Portrait of Mrs. Wynant Van Zandt	34
33.	Watch-Seal of Louis Philippe	34
34.	Portrait of General Richard Montgomery	52
35.	The Apthorpe Mansion	75
36.	"Liberty Hall"	81
37.	Head of a Lady of Fashion, 1776	87
38.	Bayard Arms	88
39.	Portrait of General Matthew Clarkson	101
40.	Clarkson Arms	102
41.	Portrait of Governor George Clinton	118
42.	Portrait of Mrs. George Clinton	118
43.	Home of General Philip Schuyler	146
44.	Portrait of Lord Stirling	156
45.	Waddell Arms	157
46.	Portrait of Augustus Jay	164
47.	Portrait of John Jay	175

Hosted by Google

ILLUSTRATIONS IN TEXT. — *Continued.*

		Page
48.	Portrait of Mrs. John Jay	177
49.	The Waddell Chairs	191
50.	Manor-house, Gardiner's Island, and View of Gardiner's Bay	199
51.	Homes of Walter Rutherford and William Axtell	207
52.	Portrait of Dr. John Cochrane	215
53.	Verplanck House, Fishkill	220
54.	Portrait of Alexander Hamilton	234
55.	Portrait of Mrs. Alexander Hamilton	235
56.	Portrait of Lafayette	254
57.	Autographs of Signers of Definitive Treaty	266
58.	Portrait of David Hartley	269
59.	Hartley Arms	270
60.	Reade Arms	274
61.	Residence of Gouverneur Morris	280
62.	Specimen of Counterfeit Money	292
63.	Lady Kitty Duer	295
64.	Walton Arms	298
65.	Verplanck Arms	300
66.	The City Hospital	306
67.	Portrait of Gouverneur Morris	317
68.	Washington's Residence in New York	330
69.	Washington taking the Oath	337
70.	Residence of General John Lamb	350

MAPS.

		Page
1.	Map of De Lancey Estate before the Revolution	617
2.	Map of New York in 1768	757
3.	Map of Manhattan Island in 1776	68
4.	Sketch of Battle-Ground, Long Island	106
5.	Sketch of Battle-Field, Harlem Heights	129
6.	Map of Great Fire, 1776	136
7.	Map of British Route to White Plains	140

ARTISTS.

CHARLES S. REINHART, ALFRED FREDERICKS, FELIX O. C. DARLEY, GEORGE GIBSON, C. E. H. BONVILLE, AUGUST WILL, C. R. PARSONS, THOMAS BEACH, ABRAM HOSIER.

ENGRAVERS.

A. BOBBIT, J. M. RICHARDSON, JOHN KARST, JOHN P. DAVIS, PHILIP MEEDER, JOS. HARLEY, JAMES S. FOY, D. C. HITCHCOCK, E. A. WINHAM, RICHARD M. SMART, CHRISTIAN WEBER, BOOKHOUT, GEORGE F. SMITH, THOMAS L. SMART.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXVI.

1737 - 1745.

CITY IMPROVEMENTS.

CITY IMPROVEMENTS. — THE FIRST QUARANTINE. — TRINITY CHURCH. — ADOLPHE PHILIPSE. —THE DISFRANCHISEMENT OF THE JEWS. — POLITICAL THROES. — JUDGE LEWIS MORRIS. — JOHN CRUGER. — DANIEL HORSEMANDEN. — POLITICAL PARTIES. — THE NEW MARKET-HOUSE IN BROADWAY. — THE DE LANCEY MANSION. — DEATH OF MRS. CLARKE. — THE NEGRO PLOT. — BURNING OF THE GOVERNOR'S HOUSE IN THE FORT. — MARY BURTON. — WHOLESALE ALARM. — THE COMMON COUNCIL. — BURNING AT THE STAKE. — HANGING. — TRANSPORTATION OF CONVICTS. — DAY OF PUBLIC THANKSGIVING. — THE YELLOW FEVER IN NEW YORK. — DR. COLDEN'S MEDICAL TREATISE. — GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON. — THE WARREN FAMILY. — MANSION OF ADMIRAL SIR PETER WARREN. — SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON. — THE INDIANS. — THE FRENCH. — THE CONQUEST OF LOUISBURG. — SIR WILLIAM PEPPERELL. — ADMIRAL SIR PETER WARREN.

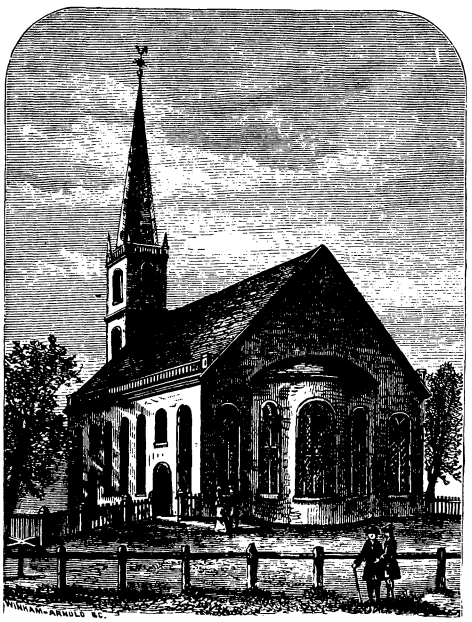
THE city was as yet without form or symmetry. The streets had come to pass in a crooked and irregular manner, and the buildings were of as many styles and sizes as dates. The sidewalks were generally roofed with foliage in the summer time, for the shade-trees beforementioned had spread out their branches and leafy boughs, and, with the exception of the shrubs and flowers which appeared on all sides, were the most beautiful objects upon Manhattan Island. The corporation instituted improvements now and then. Water Street, from Fulton to Peck Slip, was rescued from the river during the year 1737. But there were no special signs of growth about this particular period.

An alarm was created in the early spring by a report that small-pox and spotted fever were raging in South Carolina. A pilot-boat was at once ordered to be constantly in waiting at or near Sandy Hook, for the purpose of boarding all vessels from Barbadoes, Antigua, and South Carolina. The commanders of such vessels were ordered to anchor near Bedloe's Island, and to permit no persons or goods to be landed until visited by physicians from the city. Thus was established the first quarantine in New York. **1737.**

Trinity Church was enlarged this year. The inside of the edifice was ornamented beyond that of any other place of public worship in this country. The head of the chancel was adorned with an altar-piece, and oppo-

Hosted by Google

site, at the other end of the building, was subsequently placed a superb organ. The tops of the pillars which supported the galleries were decked with the gilt busts of winged angels. From the ceilings were suspended glass branches of great beauty. Upon the walls appeared the escutcheons of Governor Fletcher and other benefactors of the church. The furniture of the communion-table, desk, and pulpit was of the richest and costliest quality. Three full sets of communion-plate had been bestowed successively by William and Mary, Queen Anne, and one of the Georges, each inscribed with the donor's initials and the royal arms. A wealthy and fashionable congregation filled its pews every Sabbath; and it was not long before its increased accommodations were found inadequate to the wants of the organization, and St. George's Chapel, on Beekman Street, was projected. The early Episcopal ministers were zealous, self-denying, hard-working Christians, and the rapid growth of this church was, in a large measure, due to their praiseworthy endeavors to promote its best interests. The Rev. William Vesey, who was rector for over half a century, occupied the pulpit at this time. Beneath the floor were vaults of the leading families attached to the congregation, denoted by sculptured entablatures along the side walls of the building.



Trinity Church, 1737.

It was about this time that Free-Masonry first created a ripple in the atmosphere. In the New York Gazette of November 28, 1737, appeared the following: —

"*Mr. Bradford:* There being a new and unusual sect or society of late spread into these parts of America, their Principles, Practices, and Designs not being known to the world, has been the reason that in Holland, France, Italy, and other places they have been suppressed. All other societies that have appeared in the world have published their Principles and Practices, and when they meet set open their Meeting-house Doors for all who will come in and see and hear

Hosted by Google

them; but this Society called Free-Masons, meet with their doors shut, and a guard at the outside to prevent any to approach near to hear or see what they are doing. They oblige all their Proselytes to keep their Principles and Practices secret, according to the severe Oath they are obliged to take at their first admittance, viz.: —

"'I, A. B., Hereby solemnly vow and swear in the Presence of Almighty God and this Right Worshippful Assembly, that I will Hail and Conceal, and never Reveal the Secrets or Secrecy of Masons or Masonry, that shall be revealed unto me; unless to a true and lawful brother, after due Examination, or in just and Worshippful Lodge of Brothers and Fellows well met.

"'I furthermore Promise and vow, that I will not write them, print them, mark them, carve them, or engrave them, or cause them to be written, printed, marked, carved, or engraved on wood or stone, so that the visible character or impression of a letter may appear, whereby it may be lawfully obtained.

"'All this under no less penalty than to have my throat cut, my tongue taken from the roof of my mouth, my heart plucked from under my left breast, the same to be buried in the sands of the sea, the length of a cable rope from shore, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty-four hours; and my body burned to ashes and scattered upon the face of the earth, so that there shall be no more remembrance of me among Masons. So help me God.'"

Henceforward the growth of the organizations may be traced in the frequent notices of Masonic meetings which appeared in the public prints, until it embraced many of the most distinguished men of the period.

The principal historical incident of 1738, was the memorable contested election between Adolphe Philipse and Gerrit Van Horne, in connection with which the Jews were disfranchised. Philipse, who had been speaker of the House for a dozen years, lost his seat in the general election of 1737. Gerrit Van Horne, one of the members elect from the city, died shortly after, and a special election was held to fill the vacancy. Cornelius Van Horne, the son of the deceased, was the candidate in opposition to Philipse; and when the latter was declared chosen, the former entered a complaint of dishonesty in the counting of votes against the sheriff. The House ordered that neither Philipse nor Van Horne should be admitted to membership until the sheriff had been examined. William Smith appeared as counsel for Van Horne, and Robert Murray for Philipse. The latter, according to Parliamentary usage, moved for a scrutiny of votes. This was carried, in spite of all efforts to the contrary, and the success provoked a spirited attack upon Alexander, who as a member of the Upper House could not rightfully occupy a seat in the Lower House. Alexander quickly responded that he had not acted in council since his election, and was ready to promise not to do so during

1738.

Hosted by Google

the continuance of the Assembly; whereupon the House resolved, that while he kept his pledge he was duly qualified, but that upon the breach of it he should be expelled.

Philipse and Van Horne were directed to exchange lists of questionable electors; the sheriff had already been acquitted of fraud, as far as he was concerned. Smith denied the qualification of the Jews as electors, some of them having voted for Philipse. A singular debate on the subject was the result, which occupied several days. Murray urged the authority of the law which gave the suffrage to all free-holders of competent estates, not excepting "the descendants of Abraham, according to the flesh."

Smith — whose captivating eloquence equalled, if not surpassed, that of Andrew Hamilton, and was possibly not excelled by even that of Patrick Henry, when he dethroned the reason of the court and led captive the jury in the great tobacco case in Virginia, a few years afterward — made a speech which convinced his audience that the honor of Christianity and the preservation of the Constitution was at stake. It was delivered in plain and vigorous English, and with the assurance and confidence that is only born of power. He covered all the possibilities of his adversary's case, reviewed the history, and expressed the most tender pity for the Jews, revealed a knowledge of the Bible which astonished both lawyers and representatives, and then turned to the sacrifice of Christ, and so pathetically described the bloody tragedy on Mount Calvary, that one of the members cried out in agony, begging him to desist, declaring his conviction. Strong men wept; and the unfortunate Israelites were content to lose their votes, could they escape with their lives. Such was the effect of this remarkable oratory, that the massacre of every Jew in Christendom for the ancestral sin of crucifying Jesus of Nazareth, would have seemed at the moment, in the minds of many, as not only just and proper, but a solemn duty.

After some little delay, the House decided, 1, that Jews could not vote; 2, that non-resident freeholders had a right to vote; 3, that such as were freeholders of £40, three months before the test of the writ of election, were voters; but, 4, a grantee of a mortgage in fee forfeited, who has been in possession of the mortgaged premises for several years, was declared not entitled to a vote by virtue of such mortgage.

Although the Jews were denied the right of suffrage, the fact that non-resident freeholders were entitled to the same, gave Philipse the final victory, and he was declared a member. The next year he was again chosen speaker, and remained in the chair until 1745. He then retired from public service, being eighty years of age. He owned about twenty by twelve square acres of land in Putnam County, and thereabouts, em-

Hosted by Google

bracing Lake Mahopac, and its picturesque surroundings. This property was let out to such as would come and settle on it, rent free for a few years. Philipse built a small log-house for his own accommodation, whenever he should choose to make the fifty-mile journey from New York to look after his possessions. He actually made this journey in 1744, then seventy-nine years of age, and caused the first road to be laid out through his twenty-mile farm, by marking trees and erecting stakes.[1]

The presence of Philipse in the House strengthened the conservative party, and caused many a warm discussion. And when the tempest within was abated by the settlement of a point, a tempest without generally commenced, for the Council rarely approved of any Act of the Lower House without first embarrassing it with a variety of amendments. The loss altogether of certain bills, for the regulation of elections and feeing of officials, produced great dissatisfaction. The Assembly finally became stiff and unyielding, and instead of complying with Clarke's desire for the adoption of measures which would provide for the payment of salaries, and the creation of a sinking fund for the redemption of the bills of the colony, it resolved, unanimously, to grant no supplies on the principles advanced by the lieutenant-governor.

Clarke was indignant, and dissolved the body "for taking," he said, "such presumptuous, daring, and unprecedented steps that he could not look upon it but with astonishment, nor could he with honor suffer their authors to sit any longer." Oct. 20.

To add to the disagreeable agitations of the season, the Triennial Act, which passed the House in 1737, for the frequent election of representatives to serve in General Assembly, and for the frequent calling and meeting of the General Assembly so elected, was repealed by the king. Nov. 30.

The next election occurred in the spring; in the choice of a speaker, after much commotion, Lewis Morris, Jr., was set aside, in favor of Adolphe Philipse. Lewis Morris, Jr., was a much younger man than his rival, being only forty-one. He was strikingly unlike his father, who was now in the gubernatorial chair of New Jersey, had less forensic ability, rarely indulged in offensive sarcasm, and possessed great suavity of manner, with genuine humor. As a politician he was wary, self-reliant, and equal to any emergency. What he once maintained he would never abandon or lay aside for an instant. He avoided speech-making, but when driven to it through any extraordinary excitement he never lacked expression, though some of his rhetorical flights were re- 1739.

[1] He died in 1750, and his estate reverted to his nephew, the second Lord of the Manor.

Hosted by Google

garded as pedantic, and his pluck almost reached audacity. He had great gift in repartee, and was singularly entertaining in society. He was a handsome man, bearing a striking resemblance in face and figure to his grandfather, James Graham.[1] He married for his first wife Trintie, daughter of Dr. Samuel Staats. His elder son, Lewis, was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence; his second son, Staats Long Morris, adhered to the crown in the Revolution, married Lady Catharine Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Aberdeen, and widow of the Duke of Gordon, and died a full general in the British army. His third son, Richard, was Chief Justice of New York from 1779 to 1790. He married for his second wife, in 1746, Sarah, daughter of Nicholas Gouverneur. Their son was the celebrated Gouverneur Morris, United States Minister to France at the period of the French Revolution.[2]

The Twenty-Second Assembly was as unmanageable as its predecessor. The demand for a permanent-supply bill was met by an obstinate refusal. The autumn session was held in a small house on the bank of the Hudson, two miles out of town, on account of the small-pox, which was raging in the city. It would only grant annual supplies to the government, and it was about to trench yet further upon the royal prerogative, by insisting upon specific applications of the revenue, indicated by a clause to be inserted in the bill.

Oct. 13. Clarke was perplexed indeed. He finally prorogued the body for a few days, for the express purpose, he said, "of affording the members leisure to reflect seriously upon the line of duty required of them by the exigencies of the country." He then brought the subject before the Council. He was not inclined to revive old animosities, or create new ones by another summary dissolution. The Council referred the question to a special committee, of which the Hon. Daniel Horsemanden was chairman. He was one of the most energetic supporters of kingly power; but, in consequence of the existing posture of affairs, and the necessity of a speedy provision for the public purse, the committee reported unanimously against a dissolution. They gave their opinion "that the Assembly, and the people whom they represented, had the disputed point so much at heart that it would be impossible to do business with them unless it was conceded." Governor Morris of New Jersey had recently established

[1] The picture of Lewis Morris, son of Governor Lewis Morris, was erroneously published for that of his father, in the Volume of *Papers of Governor Lewis Morris*, by the New Jersey Historical Society.

[2] In the possession of Mr. Robert Rutherford, of the city of New York, is the family Bible of Judge Lewis Morris above mentioned. It is a Dutch folio, bound in embossed pig-skin, with brass clasps and corner-pieces, illustrated with copper-plates, and bears the imprint of Peter Rotterdam De Jonge, Dort and Amsterdam, 1714.

Hosted by Google

the precedent by yielding a similar point to the Legislature of that State; should a dissolution take place, there was no reason to suppose the next Assembly would be less tenacious in asserting the offensive principle. And the lieutenant-governor acquiesced. A better state of feeling was the result; the Assembly made various appropriations for the defense of the province, in view of a threatened rupture with Spain, which shortly after occurred.

John Cruger was appointed mayor of the city in October. He was an eminent merchant, who had resided in New York since the commencement of the century. He married Maria Cuyler in 1702. He was held in high estimation by his contemporaries; was chosen successively for twenty-two years — from 1712 to 1733 — alderman of the Dock Ward (now the First Ward). He had two sons, Henry and John, the latter of whom was at this time a stirring young man of twenty-nine, and subsequently became one of the most trusted officers of the crown, the favorite representative of the people, mayor of the city, one of the founders and the first president of the Chamber of Commerce, in short, the central figure among the remarkable personages of that eventful colonial period just prior to the birth of a great nation. Henry was also a prominent public character, serving in the Assembly and in the Council for many years. Of the sons of the latter, John Harris Cruger was chamberlain of the city prior to the Revolution, and in the struggle, remained true to the king and became a distinguished officer in De Lancey's brigade; Henry Cruger went to England and was colleague of Edmund Burke in Parliament, and afterwards mayor of Bristol; and Nicholas Cruger was the successful West India merchant under whose patronage Alexander Hamilton came to this country. The Crugers were large ship-owners engaged in general trade, chiefly with Bristol and the West Indies. Their place of business was on Cruger's Wharf, east of Whitehall Slip, on the East River.[1]

The recorder of the city (from 1736 to 1747) was Daniel Horsemanden, who was also a member of the Executive Council, and one of the judges of the Supreme Court. He was a man of some forty-five years. He came to New York with Governor Cosby. He was born in Gouldhurst, Kent County, England. His education and natural abilities fitted him for

[1] The family of Cruger is supposed to be of Danish origin. The first of the name in England are reputed to have emigrated from the continent in the reign of Henry VIII., and settled in Bristol, where numerous ancient monuments to the family exist in the churchyard attached to the cathedral. John Cruger was the earliest of the name in New York; he first appears in 1698, as supercargo of the trading ship, *The Prophet Daniel*, Captain Appel, which weighed anchor at New York, bound to the coast of Africa, where she fell into the hands of pirates, — a misfortune of which Cruger published a curious account on his return. *Chamber of Commerce Records*, pp. 5 – 18. By John Austin Stevens.

Hosted by Google

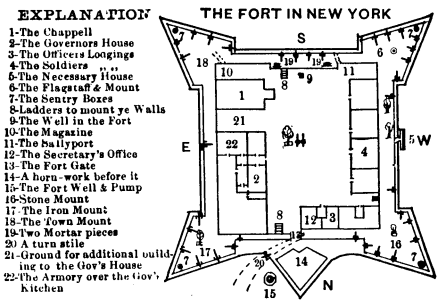
almost any station in life, but his mind was tinctured with notions acquired in the early part of his career, long before he came to this country, which rendered him unfriendly to the fair development of colonial character. He was hostile to Catholicism, biased in favor of existing forms of government, and unreasonably prejudiced against the Dutch. He became in course of time (in 1763) chief justice of the province. But he was never quite equal to the full and impartial examination of facts and circumstances in cases where party interests were involved. The office of city recorder was his reward for energetic exertions in behalf of Clarke in opposition to Van Dam. His subsequent vicissitudes of fortune were many; he was at one time in the depths of pecuniary distress, through his suspension from all offices of emolument by Governor Clinton, but an advantageous marriage with Mrs. Vesey, the widow of the Rector of Trinity Church, saved him from the horrors of a debtor's prison, and he was finally restored to the bench with increased consideration.[1]

Governor Lewis Morris, although devoted to the administration of New Jersey, still had the affairs of New York very much at heart. His letters to Sir Charles Wager, and other of the English noblemen, were a revelation in themselves. Speaking of the people in either province, he said they were permeated by insincerity and ignorance, and with so rooted a jealousy of governors, that it required more temper and skill to rule wisely than fell to every man's share. The voters who made the Assembly could not always read, but they knew enough to clamor for the sole direction of the government. He could hardly decide whether it were better to attempt to drive or lead them. As for the Assemblymen themselves, they spent the larger part of their time in unprofitable disputes. There was so much choler among them that they shunned the conversation of each other out of the House, in about the same ratio that they failed to preserve the rules of common decency within. If a bill was proposed, however meritorious, by one party, the other opposed it, seemingly or really, for opposition's sake; and both sides descended to downright scolding, giving the lie, threatening to spit in the face, and often getting together by the ears. Morris said he made these little unpleasantnesses

[1] Horsemanden was restored to his place on the bench July 28, 1750, and resumed his seat in the Council in September, 1755. *Council Minutes*, XXV. On the resignation of Judge Chambers in 1672, he was appointed second judge of the Supreme Court; and chief justice in March, 1763. He was the last chief justice of New York as a province. He adhered to the royal cause upon the breaking out of the Revolution, and was one of the nine hundred and forty-six loyalists who presented an address to Lord Howe in 1776, and on the same day, he addressed Governor Tryon in behalf of the same persons. *Sabine.* He died in 1778. In his will he made several bequests for public objects, chiefly connected with Trinity Church; £500, however, were bequeathed to King's College.

Hosted by Google

rather a matter of diversion than otherwise, occasionally expressing surprise that good men should think so ill of each other. He was friendly to Clarke, and spoke of him in terms of commendation. But he said the latter was in an unfortunate dilemma. He had conducted himself in such a way that he was considered one of the most artful of beings. The party who supported Cosby believed that Clarke had been the director of all his measures; and when Clarke denied the charge in order to curry favor with the opposition, and accredited the missteps of the late governor to Mrs. Cosby (who really was an intriguing, managing, unprincipled woman, and doubtless exerted a very unhealthful influence over her weak husband), he gained nothing, while he lost the good-will and fellowship of those who had been his most ardent co-workers; they at first grew cool towards him, then they fell to upbraiding him in private, and, growing more free, finally seemed to lose patience with courtesy, and attacked him in all companies, finding fault with his acts and measures, even descending to a pitch of rudeness unpardonable in the superlative degree, which it must have been difficult indeed to have overlooked. Peter De Lancey, the son-in-law of Dr. Colden, and brother to the chief justice, meeting Clarke one day close by the fort wall, expressed himself in terms of the most contemptuous abuse, because of certain recent proceedings attributed to the influence of "his Excellency," notwithstanding that Mrs. Clarke and her daughter were walking upon the ramparts of the fort, within hearing of his ungracious utterances. The opposition interpreted Clarke's indifference to such attacks as sheer pretense. They regarded the whole as a sort of mysterious blind for their eyes. Suspicion had not only taken deep root but flourished.



Plan of Fort George.

A traveler passing through New York not far from this period gives a humorous account of how he was entertained by the different political parties. He dined with some of the prominent "courtiers," who called everybody black except themselves. "Fine times for a Dutch mob to judge of prerogatives!" said one. "These Dutchmen will fancy by and by that they are in Holland, and treat us like a parcel of burgomasters!" exclaimed another; and thus the banquet was enlivened to the end. He thought it would be more agreeable to go among the no-party men, but,

Hosted by Google

although the evening commenced propitiously, he soon discovered, to his surprise, that they were as violent "courtiers" as any he had ever seen. He was invited to a club consisting of both-party men, and thought they would have devoured each other before they separated. He spent an evening with some Zengerites, whose discourse was peppered with invectives against the "courtiers," whom they considered the common enemies of mankind. He almost became a convert to the opinion that no man could have good sense — he must be a fool or a rascal — if he differed from his neighbor on any of the topics of the day. But he had yet to make the acquaintance of the "Prudents," those who in their hearts were resolved to court the rising power, without giving umbrage to the minority. Their maxim was, "Differ with no one who has the power to injure you." He thought the maxim tended too much towards depriving men of their liberty; and that the "Prudents" themselves were monotonous bores. He finally resolved to visit the ladies. Alas! they were more zealous politicians than the gentlemen. He found "courtiers," and "Zengerites," no-party women, both-party women, and "Prudents"; and they were, as he expressed himself, "as warm as scalloped oysters in their discussions, although exceptionally good-mannered."

It was during the year 1739 that a market-house, forty-two feet long by twenty-five broad, arose in the middle of Broadway, on the site of the old wagon-stand, opposite Liberty Street. It was an improvement, although progress soon converted it into a hideous deformity as far as the street was concerned. Trinity Churchyard was about the same time enlarged and beautified.

Just north of Trinity Church was the elegant De Lancey mansion, which was subsequently converted into the City Hotel. It was an immense edifice, encircled by balconies, with a wide piazza reaching the entire length of the rear of the house. The water view from this point, with the Jersey shores and heights reaching far into the distant horizon, was magnificent. The highly cultivated grounds ran down to the water's edge, and Thames Street was the alley-way of the property. It was the residence of Hon. Stephen (Etienne) De Lancey, and, after his death, of his son, Chief Justice James De Lancey. It was where the beautiful Susanna De Lancey was courted, and married to Admiral Sir Peter Warren; and where her still more captivating sister, Ann, was united in wedlock to Hon. John Watts.

1740. In the spring of 1740, Mrs. Clarke, the wife of the lieutenant-
May 19. governor, died, and her remains were tenderly deposited in Trinity Church. She was regarded with enthusiastic affection by the people of New York, and the whole city was thrown into the deepest affliction. Her

Hosted by Google

generosity to the poor had given her the title of "Lady Bountiful," and, on the day of her funeral, the corporation ordered, "that, as it was a pleasure to her in life to feed the hungry, a loaf of bread should be given to every poor person who would receive it." [1]

Ever since the horrible affair of 1712, the citizens of New York had been more or less afraid of the negro slaves, who comprised so large a part of the population of the city. Stringent measures had been adopted from time to time to keep them under surveillance; if three negroes were at any time seen together, the penalty was forty lashes on the bare back, and if a negro was seen walking with a club in his hand, outside of his master's grounds, he was sure to receive a like number of lashes. The colored people would steal; they seemed to have no moral ideas beyond the punishment awaiting them, and were constantly being detected in petty thefts, and subjected to the barbarous treatment characteristic of the times.

Things grew worse instead of better, until the "Negro Plot" made the year 1741 memorable in history. 1741.

On the 28th of February the house of Robert Hogg, corner of Broad and South William Streets, was robbed. Mary Burton, an Feb. 28. indented servant to a tavern-keeper of low character, in gossiping with a neighbor, said her employer was in the habit of receiving and secreting stolen goods in his house. This reaching the ears of the city magistrates, the whole family were arrested, and committed for trial; as also two negroes, Prince and Cæsar, who were accused of the robbery.

One day about noon, some three weeks later, the governor's house in the fort — occupied by Clarke — was suddenly discovered March 18. to be on fire, which, together with the little chapel, secretary's office, and several adjoining buildings, was totally consumed. The accident was at the time supposed to be the result of the carelessness of a plumber, who had left fire in a gutter between the house and the chapel.

But, within the following week, the chimney of Admiral Sir Peter Warren's house took fire one morning; it was extinguished, however, with slight damage. Then a fire broke out in the store-house of Winant Van Zandt, which was charged to the heedlessness of a smoker. Three days subsequently the hay in a cow-stable near the house of Mr. Quick was discovered burning. The alarm was sounded, and the flames suppressed. Before the people had reached their homes there was a fifth alarm; a fire was emanating from between two beds in the loft of a kitchen occupied by two negroes, in the house of Mr. Thompson. The next morning coals were found under a haystack near a coach-house in Broadway. The following day a fire burst forth from the house of Sergeant Burns opposite

[1] New York Gazette, May 26, 1740.

Hosted by Google

the fort; and a few hours later, the roof of Mr. Hilton's house near the Fly Market was discovered on fire, and, on the same afternoon, Colonel Frederick Philipse's storehouse was all ablaze.

The coincidence of circumstances seemed to render it certain that some if not all of these fires were the effect of design, and suspicion fell upon the negroes. The wholesale alarm induced many of the citizens to remove their goods and valuables to places of safety beyond the city limits; while every colored individual who could not tell a straight story was lodged in jail.

April 11. On the 11th of April the Common Council offered a reward of one hundred pounds, and a full pardon, to any conspirator who would reveal his knowledge of the plot, which was now believed to exist among the negroes, for burning the city and effecting a general revolution. The negroes were examined without eliciting any facts, and the city was searched for strangers and suspicious persons without success.

April 21. Finally the prisoners were brought before the Supreme Court, Judges Philipse and Horsemanden presiding. The grand jury on this occasion were, Robert Watts, foreman, Jeremiah Latouche, Joseph Read, Anthony Rutgers, John Cruger, Jr., John McEvers, Adonijah Schuyler, Abraham De Peyster, John Merrit, David Provoost, Abraham Ketteltas, Henry Beekman, Rene Hett, David Van Horne, Winant Van Zandt, George Spencer, and Thomas Duncan. The proclamation of pardon and reward was read to Mary Burton; after much persuasion she testified that meetings of negroes had been held at her master's house, and that they had a plan to burn the fort and city, after which her master was to be *king*, and Cæsar *governor;* that Cuff Philipse[1] used to say that some people had too much and others too little, but that the time was coming when master Philipse would have less and Cuff more. She swore, however, at that time that she never saw any white person present when the negroes talked of burning the town, except her master and mistress, and Peggy Carey. The latter was a woman of questionable reputation. She was next examined; but denied all knowledge of the fires, and said she could not accuse any one without telling a falsehood. She was convicted of having received and secreted the stolen goods, and sentenced to death. Terrified, she begged for a second examination, and grasping the means of rescue that had been previously offered to her, she made a startling confession, implicating many persons, who were immediately arrested on her evidence; but her stories were apparently invented to save herself from the gallows, and the magistrates were incredulous.

[1] The negroes were familiarly called by the surnames of their masters.

Hosted by Google

She was executed, and with her dying speech pronounced all her former confessions "lies."

In the mean time several fires had occurred at Hackinsack, New Jersey, and two negroes, condemned as incendiaries, were burned at the stake in a most horrible manner.

Cæsar and Prince were the next victims. They denied all knowledge of the conspiracy to the last, although they confessed to the stolen goods. The terrified negroes began to criminate each other upon all sides, hoping thus to save themselves from the dreadful death which awaited them. Many more were arrested. The details of the several trials and executions are too sickening for repetition. The tavern-keeper and his wife were hung on the 12th of June, their conviction and condemnation resting on the sole evidence of the girl Mary Burton. Several other executions presently followed. The burnings at the stake were enough to make humanity shudder.

May 11.

June 12.

On the 19th of June the lieutenant-governor issued a pardon to all who would confess and reveal the names of their accomplices, before the ensuing 1st day of July. Upon this the accusations multiplied with frightful rapidity. Mary Burton suddenly remembered that John Ury, a Catholic priest and a school-teacher in the city, had been concerned. The evidence received against this unhappy man can only find its parallel in the annals of the Salem witchcraft. He was condemned to the gallows and suffered on the 29th of August, proclaiming his innocence to the last. Many white people were arrested; finally, Mary Burton, grown bolder by success, began to implicate persons of consequence. This startled the government, and a stop was put to all further proceedings.

June 19.

Aug. 29.

But the catalogue of victims had already been fearful. One hundred and fifty-four negroes had been imprisoned, of whom fourteen were burned at the stake, eighteen hanged, two gibbeted, seventy-one transported, and the rest pardoned or discharged for want of proof. Twenty-four white persons were tried and imprisoned, four of whom were among the executed.

Ury was tried not only as a conspirator, but for officiating as a Popish priest, under the law of the colony passed in 1700, for the purpose of driving the French missionaries from the Indian country, and was convicted on both indictments. A letter from General Oglethorpe, the visionary Lycurgus of Georgia, to the lieutenant-governor, gave weight to the suspicions against the poor fellow. It had been discovered that some Spanish Catholic slaves, lately captured and sold in the city at public vendue, were accomplices in the plot. Oglethorpe wrote that he was in

Hosted by Google

possession of private intelligence to the effect that the Spaniards had employed emissaries to burn all the towns of any note in English North America, in order to prevent the subsisting of the great naval expedition bound for the West Indies, and that many priests were employed as aids in the infernal project, who were expected to gain access to families as physicians, dancing-masters, etc. The fate of Ury was lamented after it was too late; and when the community was restored to its right mind, and became convinced that the conspiracy only existed in the imagination, excepting as far as negroes were desirous of creating alarms, to enable them to commit thefts with more ease, the proceedings against him were generally condemned as harsh, cruel, and unjust. There was no resisting the whirlwind when every man thought he was in danger from a foe in his own house. A panic seized the whole population which produced effects similar to the terror which drove men mad respecting witches and witchcraft in both Europe and America, and which made all England insane in the time of Titus Oates. A woman testified in court one day, that she saw three negroes walking up Broadway (at the time the fires were occurring with the greatest frequency), and one of them threw up his hands and with a chuckling laugh said, "Fire, fire, scorch, scorch a little, — damn it by and by!" The judges and the jury esteemed such evidence overwhelming. The Assembly caught the infection. It was in session while these tragedies were being enacted in the court-room and under the broad blue skies. It thanked the officers who were the most active and vigorous in detecting supposed criminals, and passed severer laws against the slaves.

The perjured Mary Burton received the £100 which had been promised. Her various statements should have rendered her whole testimony unworthy of credit. It is probable that the fear of death and the hope of pardon induced many who were not guilty to make confessions. The negroes were afraid of each other, and each wanted to be first at the confessional. They had no defense nor legal advice, and their total ignorance led them into such singular behavior, in many instances, as to insure almost certain condemnation.

Sept. 24. When the danger seemed to have passed, a day was set apart by the lieutenant-governor for general thanksgiving.

Clarke's power over the Assembly diminished as months rolled on. In his address on the 18th of September, he said, "It is high time for you to make provision for rebuilding the house, chapel, barracks, and other edifices in the fort which were destroyed by the late fire kindled as the horrid result of an execrable conspiracy to burn this whole town and to destroy the people, which nothing but a Divine Providence hindered

Hosted by Google

from being fully executed, nor do I think we ought now to rest in such supine security as to be careless of our present and future safety: wherefore I think it necessary that you pass some good law for the proper regulation of military night-watches." The war with Spain involved many expenses. It seemed as if the purse of New York was constantly assailed for warlike outlays in one direction and another. Hitherto the French and Indians had almost driven the Province to bankruptcy. Now England had involved herself in bloody controversy with a great power, and dutiful New York must contribute to the sending of expeditions to the West Indies and elsewhere. "It may enrich you beyond all other means that can be devised," said Clarke, coaxingly; "for conquests in that direction will increase your trade and navigation."

However much such arguments influenced the House in its appropriations for the war, Clarke could not accomplish a settlement of the revenue as he desired. It responded haughtily to his address. He wrote to the Lords of Trade that the Assembly had unmasked. He said it was more than ever determined to give the revenue only from year to year. He also warned the Lords against an address which the Council had drafted and signed, praying the king to furnish money for the rebuilding of the house, chapel, barracks, secretary's office, etc., in the fort; the plea of poverty he pronounced false, the province never having been in as flourishing a condition as at present, and there was, in his opinion, no province in America less burdened with public expenditures.

One of the most important acts of this session was that of introducing the English practice of balloting for jurors. Clarke had formerly recommended it, which was the very reason why it had been suppressed until now. It was a useful law, although, like many others of that decade, expressed ambiguously, and subjected to more than one interpretation. The honor of penning it was claimed by both De Lancey and Horsemanden, and is supposed to have been the result of a joint effort.

Clarke was never indifferent at any time to the Indian affairs of the colony. The Rev. Henry Barclay,[1] afterwards rector of Trinity Church, was laboring as a missionary among the Mohawks, and the sachems petitioned the governor for a new chapel. Clarke invited the attention of the Assembly to the subject in vain. The reply he received was that if

[1] Rev. Henry Barclay, D. D., was a native of Albany, and a graduate of Yale College in 1734. He received orders in England. He was several years in the Mohawk country, and then came to New York. The translation of the liturgy into the Mohawk language was made under his direction, and that of Rev. W. Andrews and Rev. J. Ogilvie. Rev. J. Ogilvie succeeded him in his mission, and also as rector of Trinity Church. Mr. Barclay died in 1765.

Hosted by Google

the Christian converts were increasing among the Indians, the funds required for a new chapel should be raised by private contributions.

An approaching rupture with France was confidently apprehended; hence a grand council of the Confederates was held at Albany for the purpose of strengthening these important allies in their regard for the people of New York. Clarke urged the chiefs to prevent their young men from being enticed to join tribes in the interests of the French. "When united," he said, "you are like a strong rope, made of many strings and threads twisted together, but when separated are weak and easily broken." This council terminated amicably, and the Indians, well laden with presents, returned to their homes, professing friendship for Corlear (the governor) which was to endure so long as the Great Spirit should cause the grass to grow and the water to run. Notwithstanding such good resolutions, it was well understood that confidence might be placed in these forest kings only while no circumstance awakened their slumbering jealousy.

1742. A short time before, Admiral Sir Peter Warren (then Captain Warren) had purchased an immense estate in the Mohawk country. He was the younger son of a British naval officer of the ancient and honorable family of Warren, in Warrentown, county of Down, Ireland. He had been trained to the nautical profession, and in the summer of 1727 was appointed to the command of the *Grafton*, one of the four ships of the line sent out under Sir George Walton to join Sir Charles Wager, then in the Mediterranean command. He was shortly transferred to the *Solebay* frigate, and sent to the West Indies with orders touching upon the preliminaries of peace between England and Spain. Returning to London, he was appointed commander of the *Leopard*, of fifty guns, which position he held until 1735. After the rupture with Spain (in 1741) he was in command of the *Squirrel*, a twenty-gun ship, and afterwards successively of the *Launceton* of forty guns, and the *Superbe* of sixty guns, and in 1743 was commodore of a squadron.

It was during Cosby's administration that he became especially interested in New York, and from the time of his marriage with the sister of Chief Justice De Lancey, made his home in the city.

A tour of adventure into the wilderness resulted in a trade with the Indians for the tract of land above-named. At his instance the son of his sister, William Johnson, — afterwards Sir William Johnson, Bart., — then a young man of twenty-three, came to this country to superintend the improvement of this wild property.[1]

[1] Sir William Johnson, Bart., was the elder son of Christopher Johnson and Anne Warren, of Warrentown, county of Down, Ireland. He was born in 1715. His early education is in-

Hosted by Google

Young Johnson was the architect of his own fortune and subsequent fame. He succeeded from the beginning in winning the confidence and affection of the Indians. He formed a settlement upon the estate of his uncle; kept a small country-store; encouraged trade of every description; rode fifteen miles to mill, with his bag of grain, on horseback; visited the sachems in their castles, and the common people, both whites and Indians, in their huts; and mingled in all their rustic sports. He was one of the most industrious of men. His style of living was plain, his figure robust and commanding, and his bodily health perfect. Warren sent from New York and Boston such goods as were chiefly salable, — rum, axes, wrought-iron, etc., — and directed the planting of orchards, which he said would not hinder the growth of grass or Indian corn, since the trees should be placed at a great distance from each other. He also suggested that fields should be laid out in exact squares, with hedge-rows on each side to keep the land warm, and please the eye, and that shrubs and flowers should be planted for ornament. He directed his nephew to keep well with all mankind, act honorably and honestly, refrain from being notional, and to be specially careful to say nothing about the badness of the patroon's horses, for it might be taken amiss; adding "he [the patroon of Albany] is a near relation of my wife, and may have it in his power very much to serve you."

Erelong Johnson commenced the cultivation of a landed estate of his own, and secured a valuable water-power upon which he erected a saw-mill. This led to no inattention as far as the affairs of his uncle were concerned. He was equal to the management of a multiplicity of enterprises. From a farmer and dealer in furs and small wares, he became an extensive merchant, a government contractor, a general in the armies of New York, and a baronet of the British realm, with possessions exceeding any of the nobles of Europe. He was the hero alike of history and romance; his character has furnished the basis for many a weird tale, and has been invested with all manner of ingredients.[1] His peculiar relations and influence with the Indians rendered him a tower of strength when the French again set about the conquest of New York with iron determination; and his intimate connection with public affairs during the thirty years prior to the Revolution has given him a high place among the per-

volved in some mystery, but from the invoices of books which he ordered from time to time for his private library, through his correspondents in London, and from his correct use of the French and Latin language in his correspondence, it is presumed that he received a University course of instruction.

[1] *Chrysal; or, The Adventures of a Guinea*, by Charles Johnson, Vol. III., Book II., Chaps. 1, 2, 3. *The Dutchman's Fireside*, by Paulding. *The Gipsey*, by G. P. R. James. The satire in *Chrysal* is an exaggeration of the errors in the baronet's life.

Hosted by Google

sonages of the period. The massive stone mansion which he erected and fortified, was ever afterward known as Johnson Hall.

At one time a Mohawk chieftain coveted a new scarlet coat trimmed with gold lace, which Sir William had just received from London. He hesitated only a day or two before calling at Johnson Hall in the familiar manner which Johnson had himself inaugurated, and said he had "dreamed a dream." He had dreamed that the grand knight gave him his fine red coat. Sir William understood the significance of the hint, and, in tender consideration of his own popularity, gave the chieftain the much-desired treasure.

But Sir William presently dreamed a dream. He went to see the chieftain, and related it to him. He had dreamed that the chieftain and his council gave him a large tract of land, designating the boundary with geographical precision, from such a tree to such a rivulet. The gift was made, but the old Indian said, "Ugh! I no dream any more. White chief dream better than Indian."



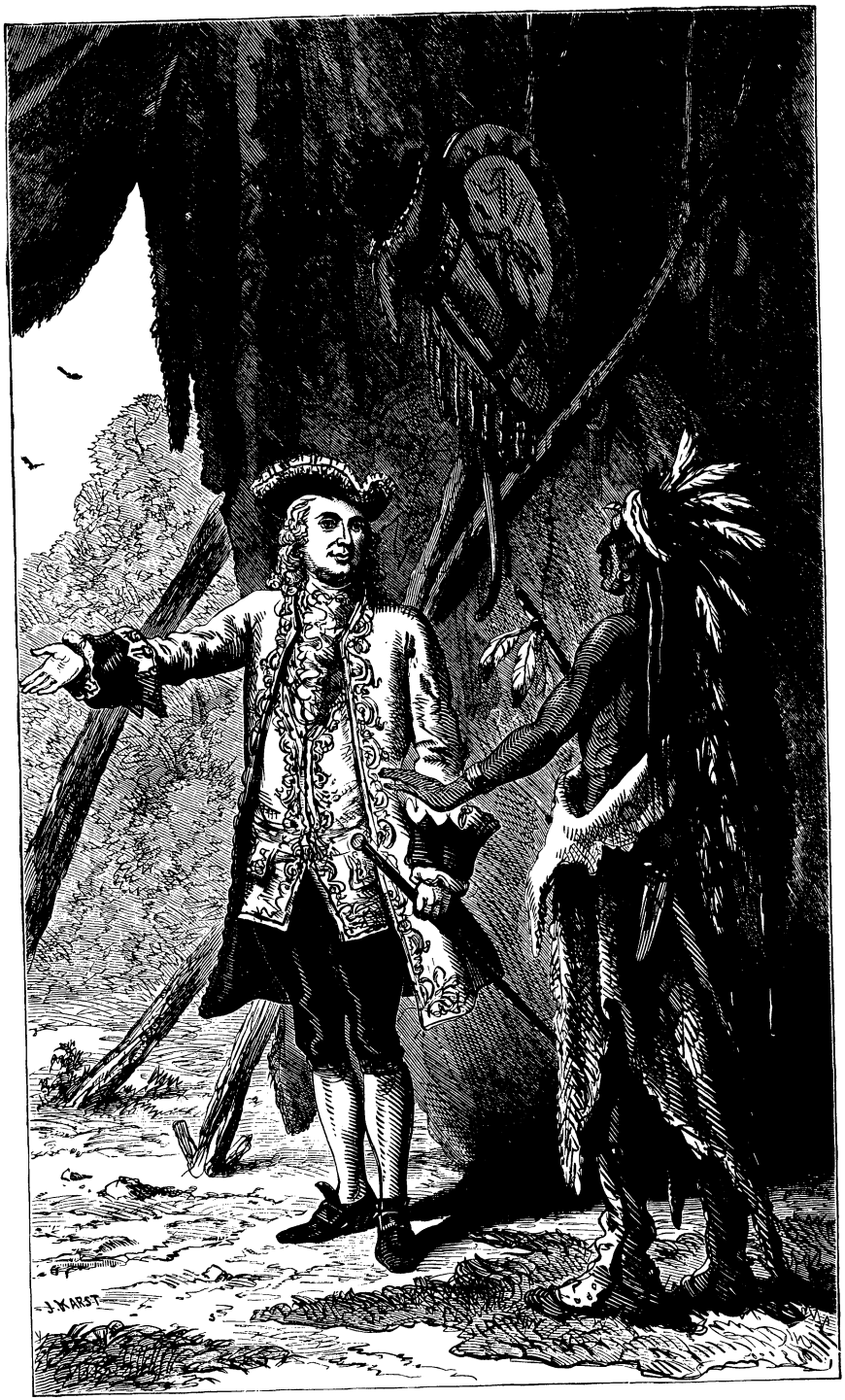
Sir Peter Warren's House.

Admiral Sir Peter Warren purchased a considerable estate on Manhattan Island, which was called Greenwich. He built upon it a country-mansion, (which stood for nearly a century,) at about the corner where Fourth intersects Perry Street, overlooking the Hudson, and laid out and beautified extensive grounds.

The Indian name of the point of land was Sapokanigan. The mansion, which was elegant in its appointments, was afterwards the residence of Abraham Van Nest.

The prevalence of yellow fever in New York was a subject which agitated men of science all over the country. Dr. Colden had long since relinquished the practice of medicine, except among his immediate friends, but his love for the profession induced him to contribute valuable additions to the medical literature of the day. He was the first to introduce into the country what he called "the cool management" of the small-pox, in which he was more successful than any other physician in America. In 1742 he made it his special business to study into the features and

Hosted by Google



"Ugh! I no dream any more. White chief dream better than Indian." Page 588.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

progress of the yellow fever in this latitude, and wrote an interesting paper, carefully pointing out local circumstances which increased its violence.[1] He recommended remedies which proved efficacious in a multitude of cases, and sanitary measures which were so prolific in results that the Common Council of New York tendered him a vote of thanks.

A governor for New York had been for some time foreshadowed. Clarke's seven years of rule terminated ingloriously. The concession by which he allowed the Assembly to prescribe the disposition of supplies granted — hitherto the legal prerogative of the crown — appeased the popular party only for a short time. The governed are rarely satisfied with concessions; each successful demand increases the clamor for more. It was thus in the experience of the lieutenant-governor. The Assembly claimed the right to appoint its own treasurer. As soon as this was conceded, there was a strenuous effort made to secure the privilege of choosing the auditor-general, failing in which, the salary of that officer was withheld. And it was with sullen disregard that all of Clarke's later speeches urging for appropriations were received. The House, for several months prior to the rising of the new sun, accomplished little except an Act for securing Oswego, and another providing for the ordinary supplies and salaries of the year. And the counselors at the same time were quite ready to welcome a new potentate.[2] 1743.

Admiral George Clinton arrived. He was accompanied by his wife and several children. He was a younger son of the late Earl of Lincoln, and had been described as a man of talent and liberality. He was cordially received. He landed near the new Battery, and at the moment of his placing his foot upon New York soil, the guns of the fort, and of the *Loo* (the vessel which had brought him to these shores) spoke loudly and well. He was met by the Council, a fine group of dignified men, and by the mayor and Common Council of the city, the militia, and many of the principal citizens. After a ceremonious greeting he was conducted to the governor's house in the fort, the way being lined with soldiers in full dress. After being refreshed with burgundy, champagne, and other wines, the distinguished procession moved to the City Hall, where his commission as governor of New York was duly published, and the usual oaths administered. Sept. 22.

Clinton had spent his life thus far in the navy. He was easy, good-natured, unambitious, and given somewhat to high living. He hoped to

[1] Nearly two hundred and fifty persons died of yellow fever in the city during the year 1742.

[2] Clarke returned to England with a large fortune acquired in New York, and purchased a handsome estate in Cheshire, where he spent the remainder of his life. He had several children, but they made no connections in this country.

Hosted by Google

mend his fortunes. Beyond that he troubled his mind very little about the results or length of his administration. He resigned himself to the current and drifted along smoothly at first.

Having learned that the Assembly was under adjournment to meet in a few days, and that the great mass of the people would be pleased with an opportunity to choose new Assemblymen, he dissolved the body and ordered an election. It was conducted for once without tumult. The new members convened in November. They voted the governor a salary of £1,560, besides £150 for house-rent, £400 for fuel and candle-light (intended to cover the wants also of the garrison), £150 to enable him to visit the Indians, £800 to be used in presents for the Indians, and £1,000 as compensation for unsuccessful solicitations at court (at the instance of the Assembly) for aid towards rebuilding the fort, and obtaining a supply of ammunition. They continued the salary of £300 to the chief justice, half that sum to Judge Horsemanden, and, on motion of Lewis Morris, began the practice of enabling the governor and Council to draw upon their treasurer for contingent services, to the amount of £60 per annum. This sum was subsequently increased to £100 per annum. The governor made no objection to their limiting the support to a year, and assented to all the bills offered him.

Nov. 8.

There was business before the House, the following year, however, of vital importance. France had assumed a threatening attitude towards England. The prospect of rebellion in Scotland, also, called for active military preparations; whatever involved England involved her American colonies, particularly New York.

1744.

James III., or *The Pretender*, who up to this time had lived in France, taking advantage of dissensions in Parliament, was trying to create a party in his favor, which with the aid of France was expected to subjugate Great Britain.

To excite loyalty in the minds of the people of this country it was only necessary to announce that their civil and religious liberties were in danger. Popery was aiming for the throne of England; this was sufficient in itself to absorb all other considerations, and brace the colony into united resistance. Lewis Morris, Jr., offered the sentiment, "The most steadfast adherence to the king and the Protestant religion," and it was immediately adopted by the House. Large sums were given for fortifications, £3,000 voted towards a mansion-house for the governor, and arrears of salary paid to Mr. Barclay, the Mohawk missionary.

The formal declaration of hostilities was known in New York early in July. Everybody was alarmed, for the city was exposed by land and by sea. The Council and the Assembly prepared a joint ad-

July.

Hosted by Google

dress to the king, expressing their abhorrence of the rebellion in Scotland and the popish Pretender. Measures were adopted for the security of New York City, and men and means sent to the frontiers, where war had actually commenced. Bills passed the House in rapid succession. One of these required all persons in the colony to take the oaths prescribed by Parliament, for the security of the government against the Catholic religion; the Quakers were allowed to affirm instead of swearing.

All at once a communication reached New York from the Commissioners of Indian Affairs, that the enemy were on the war-path from Canada, and that the English traders had retired in alarm from Oswego, which was creating a very unfavorable impression upon the minds of the Indians, particularly the remote nations, who, on coming a long distance to trade, had found the place deserted. It seemed necessary that the post should be maintained on a more ample and efficient basis than ever before, as a commanding mart, lest the tribes, disgusted with the want of courage manifested by the English, should go over to the French. The garrison at Oswego was accordingly reinforced, and large sums of money raised to increase the strength of the post and induce the traders to return. There was no lack of prompt and efficient action on the part of the Assembly. Special allowances were voted for the defense of Albany and Schenectady, and £3,200 granted for the defense of the colony at large. Sept.

Thus far the Assembly and governor had acted in concert. But when New England was all astir making preparations to attack Louisburg, — the Gibraltar of America — and Clinton, having received an urgent letter from Governor Shirley of Massachusetts, recommending a closer bond of union between the colonies in order to the more efficient conduct of the war, asked New York to co-operate, he was reminded of the liberality of the various appropriations, and told that the taxes of the people were already too great, and ought not be increased except for purposes of *defense;* besides, in the estimation of the mass of the community, the conquest of Canada belonged exclusively to the crown.

Clinton's speech to the House on the subject was not well received. One point in particular irritated certain members beyond measure. A bill was before Parliament to prevent the issue of paper currency — bills of credit — in the colonies, which from the scope of its two last clauses was supposed by many to be a design to compel Assemblymen to obey *all the orders and instructions of the crown.* Money had been sent to two gentlemen in London, who were to oppose the bill, and Clinton asked the House to refund the same. As it had been raised by persons outside, during a legislative recess, the House declined. An address was not even vouchsafed the governor, which was contrary to all parliamentary usage, and he in turn was offended.

Hosted by Google

Henceforth the House assumed a peculiar attitude in respect to Clinton, slighting his opinions and recommendations; it rejected the proposition of a guard-ship, intimated a design to lessen the garrison at Oswego, declined the advice of the Council in relation to appointing commissioners to act jointly with those of New England in treating with the Indians, voted only a small sum for the New England expedition, and delayed making provision for Indian presents. Its greatest misdemeanor, however, was in its incivilities to the governor personally, who became so exasperated in the end, that, after indulging in a severe reprimand, he
May 14. dissolved the body. He wrote to the Lords of Trade that it was astonishing how jealous the men of New York were of the power of the king; they picked flaws with every officer appointed by the crown, and gave them salaries or not, just as it suited their pleasure. In his opinion, it was impossible for any governor, in the present condition of the public mind, to exert the influence requisite to a good government.

The merchants of New York were active in fitting out privateers at their own expense, and brought in many prizes, chiefly of sugars. Admiral Sir Peter Warren was first in the field, but he refused to pay duties, saying such were not demanded in the West Indies, where he had sent many prizes. Clinton wrote to the Duke of Newcastle, asking his interposition with the Commissioners of Customs in favor of waiving duties in New York, since it was well to annoy the enemy, and the results would be beneficial to the city.

The Twenty-Fourth Assembly was composed of nearly the same members as the Twenty-Third. David Jones, who was one of the great economists of the time, was elected speaker. The culmination of horrors all along the northern and northwestern horizon influenced a certain degree of liberality in the appropriation of funds for actual defenses. But the question of direct taxation produced heart-burnings and discontents. The opinion that the crown imposed too heavy a burden upon New York in such emergencies grew with each roll of the suns. The governor was waiting to meet the chiefs of the Six Nations at Albany, and the House loftily provided for his expenses, and for Indian presents to keep the fickle warriors in the interests of the English. The Cape Breton expedition was treated with more favor, and £5,000 voted towards its accomplishment.

The harbor of Louisburg, on the southeastern side of the Island of Cape Breton, was considered the key to the American possessions of the French. By the treaty of Utrecht, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, including the island of Canseau, had fallen to the Crown of Great Britain, and Cape Breton had been ceded to the French. The harbor of the latter was con-

Hosted by Google

venient for the reception and security of ships of every burden, — man-of-war, and merchant-vessels. It afforded protection to navigation and fisheries, as well as great facilities in time of war, for interrupting the navigation and fisheries of the enemy. The French had built a fortified town — Louisburg — upon the island, which cost twenty-five years of labor, and thirty millions of livres. It was called the Dunkirk of America.[1]

The neck of land upon which the town was built was two and a quarter miles in circumference; it was regularly laid out in squares, with broad streets lined with houses, chiefly of wood, with a few of stone. On the west side was a spacious citadel, on one side of which were the governor's apartments. The ramparts on every side of the town were from thirty to thirty-six feet high, with a ditch eight feet wide. Under the ramparts were casements to receive the women and children during a siege. There were six bastions and three batteries, containing embrasures for one hundred and forty-eight cannon. On an island at the entrance of the harbor was planted a battery of thirty twenty-eight pounders; and at the bottom of the harbor, directly opposite to the entrance, was a royal battery of twenty-eight forty-two pounders, and two eighteen-pounders. On a high cliff opposite to the island battery stood a lighthouse; and within the harbor, on the northeast, a magazine of naval stores.

The entrance to the town, on the land side, was over a drawbridge, near to which was a circular battery, mounting sixteen twenty-four pounders.

The reduction of Louisburg was as desirable to the English as that of Carthage was to the Romans. Governor Shirley of Massachusetts originated the bold project. The British Ministry approved, and ordered Admiral Sir Peter Warren, then commodore, to proceed from the West Indies northward with his squadron, and co-operate with the movements of Shirley. The magnitude of the undertaking, as well as its boldness, at first startled the New-Englanders, but they soon caught the fire of enthusiasm, and made the necessary grants. Connecticut and Rhode Island enlisted in the scheme. The Connecticut division was commanded by Lieutenant-Governor Roger Wolcott,[2] bearing the commission

[1] *Marshall's Colonial History.*

[2] The Wolcotts were of the old English gentry. Henry Wolcott, one of the first settlers of Connecticut, was the son and heir of John Wolcott, of Golden Manor, in England. The manor-house is still standing, an immense castle of great antiquity, designed for the purposes of defense against the excesses of a lawless age, as well as for a permanent family residence. It is richly ornamented with carved work, and upon the walls may be seen the motto of the

Hosted by Google

of major-general. The commander-in-chief of the expedition was Colonel William Pepperell, who was raised to the rank of lieutenant-general.

Pepperell was a popular man, widely known; he possessed culture, courage, and coolness. He was of large, powerful, vigorous frame, with magnetic face and engaging manners. Before he accepted the command he asked advice of the famous preacher, Rev. George Whitfield, who replied that the affair did not look very promising; that the eyes of all the world would be upon him, and if he did not succeed, the widows and orphans of the slain would reproach him, and if he did succeed many would regard him with envy and try to eclipse his glory. Whitfield finally favored the expedition, furnishing the motto *Nil desperandum Christo duce*, for the flag, which gave the whole the air of a crusade, and many of the missionary's followers enlisted. One of them, a chaplain, carried on his shoulder a hatchet with which he intended to destroy the images in the French churches.

Warren assumed command of the naval forces by order of the Admiralty. The two commanders, Pepperell and Warren, concerted their plans, and commenced operations in the early spring of 1745. The result was one of the most brilliant achievements of the age. Louisburg fell, and the news of the important victory filled America with joy and Europe with astonishment. The colonists began to know their own strength, and England was aghast at the development of so much energy and power. Boston was illuminated, even to its most obscure alleys, and the night was signalized by fire-works and bonfires. All New England observed a day of solemn thanksgiving, set apart by the civil authority.

After the surrender of Louisburg a grand entertainment was given on shore by Pepperell, to honor Warren and the various officers of the navy who had been instrumental in the capture. Pepperell's chaplain, Rev. Mr. Moody, was somewhat prolix in saying grace before meals, and the

family arms, *Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri*, — "Inclined to swear in the words of no master." It was in keeping with the independent spirit of an English gentleman of the Middle Ages, and with that of a Puritan of a later date, who spurned the dictation of ecclesiastical wisdom. Wolcott sold a portion of his estate before he left England. He was a magistrate of the Connecticut colony, and his descendants in the direct line were magistrates, judges, and governors for over one hundred and eighty successive years. Roger Wolcott was the grandson of Henry Wolcott, and the son of Simon Wolcott and Martha Pitkin. The latter — a beautiful, self-reliant young woman — came to Connecticut to persuade her favorite brother, the distinguished William Pitkin, to return to England. Tradition says that the wise heads of the colony were anxious to retain the brother; and, charmed with the graces and superior accomplishments of the sister, resolved to capture and keep her also. Hence they selected Simon Wolcott, the handsomest and most elegant young man in Connecticut, to court and marry her. Among her descendants were six governors, and her granddaughter married another governor.

Hosted by Google

general was particularly anxious on this occasion that he should not fatigue his guests. Yet he dare not venture the hint of brevity. The chaplain, however, was imbued with the spirit of the occasion, to the supreme delight of the officer; his prayer ran thus: "Good Lord, we have so much to thank thee for, that time would be infinitely too short to do it in. We must therefore leave it for the work of eternity. Bless our board and fellowship on this joyful occasion, for the sake of Christ our Lord. Amen"

Warren was gazetted rear-admiral of the blue on the same day the news of the capitulation reached London, and was afterwards knighted. Pepperell was created a baronet, and made a colonel in the British army. Governor Shirley and Governor Wentworth were each confirmed in their governments. There was a strange reluctance on the part of the crown, however, to reimburse the colonies for the heavy expenses which they had so nobly and magnanimously incurred, and, by reason of which a conquest was effected of such magnitude, it was said, "as to prove an equivalent at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, for all the success of the French upon the continent of Europe."[1] The claim was prosecuted several years before Parliament could be brought to sanction an appropriation for its payment. The grant was finally obtained in 1749, amounting to £183,649. It was received in Boston the same year, and equitably divided among the colonies which had incurred the expenditure.[2]

The autumn of 1745 witnessed the destruction of Saratoga. A party of French and Indians from Crown Point surprised the settlement, burned the fort and other buildings, massacred more than thirty families, and carried many persons into captivity. The country was uncovered to the very city of Albany, and the utmost consternation prevailed. The northern settlers fled from their homes with their wives and little ones, and complained loudly of the neglect of the government in providing for their safety. General dissatisfaction prevailed. Nov. 16.

Now was Clinton's turn to be avenged. He had repeatedly urged the building of a fortress in the desolated region, and he reproached the House so sharply for its inattention to his requisitions, that, suppressing resentment and wrath, a resolution was adopted, to concur in every reasonable measure for the safety of the province, the assistance of the distressed, and

[1] *Belknap. Douglass. Mass. Trans.*, Vol. I. *Pepperell's Letters.*

[2] The exact sum was £183,649 25 *s.* 7½ *d.* The agent who prosecuted the claim encountered difficulties at every step. His name was William Bollan. The money was in specie. It consisted, according to a note in Holms, of two hundred and fifteen chests (three thousand pieces of eight, on an average, in each chest) of milled pieces of eight, and one hundred casks of coined copper. There were seventeen cart and truck loads of the silver, and about ten truck-loads of copper. *Mass. Hist. Coll.*

Hosted by Google

in any well-concerted plan for distressing the enemy. Rewards were offered for scalps, bills passed for raising scouting-parties, erecting redoubts, and furnishing and transporting detachments and provisions to all Indian allies. But fresh demands accumulated, and every advance of money created a quarrel among the members, often relating to the partition of the general burden among the counties, and was granted under protest.

It was about this time that the Rev. Samuel Buel, D. D., commenced his fifty years' pastorate. He was called to the church of Easthampton, Long Island, through the recommendation of Rev. Aaron Burr of Newark. He had been a pupil of Rev. Jonathan Edwards, and had married the granddaughter of Rev. John Williams of Deerfield. He was a small-sized, active, cheerful, resolute man, of profound scholarship and enthusiastic piety. He was fond of society, of the chase, was gifted in anecdote, and his ready wit was the delight of his associates.[1]

[1] The daughter (Jerusha) of Dr. Buel was married December 15, 1766, to David Gardiner, the sixth lord of the manor of Gardiner's Island. After the marriage ceremony the clergyman was congratulated by some of his people upon the honorable wedding. "Yes," he replied, "I always wished to give my daughter to the *Lord.*" Dr. Buel remained at his post during the Revolution. He made no effort to conceal his Whig principles, but his pleasantry, politeness, and tact secured him the friendship of the British officers quartered at Easthampton. He often dined with them. At one time he had been invited by Sir William Erskine to accompany them on a deer-hunt, and was behind time at the hour appointed. The younger officers, impatient of delay, had mounted when he was seen approaching. Sir William required them to dismount and receive the clergyman. Lord Percy was irritated that such deference should be shown "an old rebel," and when introduced was ungracious. Dr. Buel inquired what division of the army he had the honor to command. "*A legion of devils just from hell!*" was the ill-natured reply. "*Ah, then,*" said the clergyman, with a low bow, "*I suppose I have the honor to address Beelzebub the prince of devils.*" Although the retort was so keenly felt that the young nobleman's hand touched his sword (a movement instantly checked by Sir William), he was captivated by the wit and brilliant humor of the minister long before the chase was ended, and subsequently became one of his warmest admirers. On another occasion Sir William met Dr. Buel and remarked that he had ordered the people of his parish to appear the next day (Sunday) at Southampton with their teams. "I know you have," responded the clergyman, "but I am commander-in-chief *on that day*, and have annulled your order." The precedence was pleasantly admitted, and the order revoked. Dr. Buel was the immediate successor in the church of Rev. Nathaniel Hunting, who succeeded Rev. Thomas James, the first minister of the town, in 1650.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXVII.

1745 - 1755.

PHILIP LIVINGSTON.

PHILIP LIVINGSTON. — PHILIP LIVINGSTON'S SONS. — WILLIAM LIVINGSTON. — PHILIP LIVINGSTON'S DAUGHTERS. — PHILIP LIVINGSTON'S DEATH. — JOHN RUTHERFORD. — THE INDIAN CONFERENCE OF OCTOBER, 1745. — FREDERICK PHILIPSE. — THE PHILIPSE FAMILY. — PHILIPSE MANOR. — MARY PHILIPSE. — CLINTON AND THE ASSEMBLY. — PREPARATIONS FOR THE CANADIAN CAMPAIGN. — INDIAN CONFERENCE OF 1746. — HORRORS OF WAR. — CHIEF JUSTICE DE LANCEY. — DR. COLDEN. — VIOLENT CONTESTS. — NEW YORK UNDER DISCIPLINE. — A GLIMPSE OF NEW YORK IN 1752. — THE ODD WEDDING. — REV. AARON BURR. — SIR DANVERS OSBORNE. — STATESMANSHIP OF LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR DE LANCEY. — THE ALBANY CONGRESS. — KING'S COLLEGE. — WILLIAM LIVINGSTON. — THE GREAT FEUD. — NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY. — GOVERNOR SIR CHARLES HARDY. — THE FRENCH WAR. — GENERAL BRADDOCK. — WASHINGTON. — WAR. — ACADIA. — HON. JOHN WATTS. — THE WATTS ESTATE. — THE WATTS MANSION. — ARCHIBALD KENNEDY. — NO 1 BROADWAY.

PHILIP LIVINGSTON (the second lord of the manor) was one of the counselors. He exercised his delegated authority only upon special occasions, however, as he spent the greater portion of the year in his elegant manor-house. In all conferences with the Indians his presence was esteemed indispensable. He had been Secretary of Indian Affairs for nearly a fourth of a century, and was conversant with whatever concerned their relations with the people of the province. At an interview with the sachems of the Six Nations in the autumn of 1745, he opposed the governor's scheme for reducing Crown Point, giving reasons which occasioned a personal exchange of incivilities by no means flattering to either party; at the same time a few Mohawk warriors complained that Livingston had obtained a patent for a large tract of land in their country which had never been bought or paid for, although Indian names were attached to the documents. Clinton censured Livingston, while the latter declared that the transaction was conducted in the same manner as all former transactions of the kind, only the Indians had since quarrelled among themselves, and denied the right of the old chief (now deceased) to negotiate sales. He said such difficulties were constantly arising.

Hosted by Google

The young warriors, as soon as their fathers were gone, looked around to see what had been done, and grumbled if they happened to covet what their sires had sold. The governors of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania were present at this meeting. It was feared that the Six Nations would revolt and go over to the enemy, and every effort was made to enlist them in the British interest. Clinton thought Livingston should relinquish his claim to the contested property, and Livingston thought the British government must be getting feeble if the officers recently engrafted upon New York were a sample of its governing material; he considered himself entitled to protection.

Philip Livingston supported three princely establishments,— one in New York City, one in Albany, and his manor-house. He lived in a style of courtly magnificence. He was now sixty years of age. His brother Robert (somewhat younger than himself) built the large stone house at Clermont, (sketch, page 319) and was residing there with his family, of which the future Judge Robert R. Livingston — the father of the distinguished Chancellor Livingston — was one of the most conspicuous members. He, Robert R. Livingston, was now twenty-six, and had been married about three years to Margaret Beekman, the daughter of Colonel Henry Beekman and Janet Livingston, and granddaughter, on her mother's side, of Robert, nephew of the first lord of the manor, and Margaretta Schuyler (only daughter of Hon. Peter Schuyler). They had a large famliy, of whom more presently.

Philip Livingston's six sons were already assuming the tasks and responsibilities of active life. Robert succeeded to the manor, and was the last lord, the Revolution breaking the entail. Peter Van Brugh, Philip, John, William, and Henry were all educated at Yale. Peter Van Brugh Livingston went into mercantile speculations on an extensive scale, married Mary, the daughter of James Alexander, and built a handsome house on Prince Street; he was subsequently president of the New York Congress. Philip became a prominent merchant, erected a stone mansion on Duke Street, and a charming villa on Brooklyn Heights. He signed the Declaration of Independence. John was also a merchant; he married Catharine, the daughter of Hon. Abraham De Peyster, the treasurer of the province from 1721 to 1767, and one of the richest magnates of his time. They lived pretentiously on Queen Street near the De Peyster homestead. William was the pet and protégé of his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Van Brugh, and passed much of his boyhood with her in Albany. Before he was fourteen years old he had spent an entire year among the Mohawks, under the care of an English missionary. The language and habits of the Indians were esteemed an essential part of his education, as the proper measures

Hosted by Google

to be pursued in regard to the French and Indians was the chief subject of colonial vigilance and apprehension. This was from 1736 to 1737. He was graduated from Yale, at the head of his class, in 1741, and studied law in the office of James Alexander. He was an apt scholar, and, through the vigor and quickness of his perceptions, took marvelous strides in legal knowledge. One day his father questioned him as to how he spent his evenings. "Never fear for my morals," he replied. "I am plodding at mathematics and astronomy every night until after nine o'clock." He married Susanna French, the granddaughter of Lieutenant-Governor Anthony Brockholls, and the great-granddaughter of the first lord of Philipse Manor. He became the celebrated war-governor of New Jersey. Henry was an extensive ship-owner and importer, and he also built himself a residence in New York City.

Philip Livingston's three daughters were brilliant and accomplished women. Sarah married William Alexander, — Lord Stirling, — the son of James Alexander. Alida married Henry Hawson, and, after his death, Martin Hoffman. Catharine married John L. Lawrence.[1]

Among the counselors who attended the governor during his conference with the Indians in Albany, were Joseph Murray and John Rutherford. The latter was a new-comer, but a man of rank and learning. He was appointed by the Lords across the water, and Clinton was annoyed. He had in his mind one or two native New-Yorkers whom he wished to serve, and urgently requested that the appointment of Rutherford might be revoked. He did not accomplish his point, but he did make an enemy of the gentleman in question. Four hundred and sixty-four Indians marched into Albany the night before the conference opened. Forty-three sachems called on the governor and his party about six o'clock. They were each treated to a glass of rum, and, after an exchange of courtesies, departed to partake of the supper prepared for them by the mayor and citizens of Albany. The subject of an aggressive campaign into Canada, with the help of the Indians, was discussed during this conference without specific results. The treaty was renewed with the Mohawks, and the commissioners from the other colonies urged united effort in the matter

[1] Philip Livingston died in 1749. His funeral services were conducted in the most stately and ceremonious manner. His city mansion in Broad Street, New York, and most of the houses in the block, were thrown open to accommodate the vast assemblage. A pipe of wine was spiced for the occasion, and to each of the eight bearers were given a pair of gloves, a scarf, a handkerchief, a mourning-ring, and a monkey spoon. The obsequies were repeated at the manor with increased formalities. In addition to similar gifts to the bearers, as in the city, gloves and handkerchiefs were presented to each of the tenants. The expenses were enormous. William, his fifth son, was struck with the absurdity of the custom, and subsequently wrote a caustic article on "extravagance at funerals."

Hosted by Google

of repelling the cruel invasions of the enemy. It was evident there could be no permanent repose until the French power was crushed in America. But Clinton was at variance with his counselors, and the assistance of the Indians was doubtful; several of the elder chiefs manifested marked disinclination to pledge themselves to any belligerent action, until after a grand council of their warriors at Onondaga.



Portrait of Mary Philipse.

Upon his return to New York the governor stopped a few days at Philipse Manor. Frederick Philipse, the second lord, had recently expanded the great old-fashioned roomy manor-house (the present City Hall of Yonkers, on the Hudson) into thrice its former size, by the addition of the elegant eastern front, with its regiment of windows, and two entrances, each ornamented with eight columns and corresponding pilasters. Among the horse-chestnuts and garden-terraces which skirted the velvety lawn between the mansion and Locust Hill, crept the Albany and New York post-road. Cultivated European tastes were everywhere distinguishable in the arrangement of the grounds and parks; and immense gardens, through which stretched graveled walks bordered with box, delighted the eye with a wealth of shrubs and flowers rarely excelled in this or any other country, or age. The greensward sloped gradually and smoothly to the river on the west. The roof of the edifice was surmounted by a heavy line of balustrade, forming a terrace, which commanded an extensive view.

Hosted by Google

The contrast from the scene as it appeared at the same point, when the ancient structure, fronting the south, was first erected in 1682, was striking indeed. It arose in the midst of a picturesque wild. To the north and east were wooded hills, vales, thorny dells, rocky steeps, and fenceless pastures; to the south was a mad and musical creek rushing down through a narrow ravine, and fretting and foaming over Dutch mill-dams in its way, until it often upset them altogether; and to the west was the broad Hudson, with its opposite bank of feldspar and augite, and its waters unruffled, save by an occasional sloop and a few paddle-boats. To-day (in 1876) the ambitious city of Yonkers covers the romantic site, extending six miles along the river by three miles or more inland. And in its very heart stands the pioneer manor-house, a curious mixture of Dutch and English architecture, having externally undergone no special alteration.[1]

The interior of the new part was elaborately finished. The walls were wainscoted, and the ceilings were in arabesque work. Marble mantels were imported from England. The main halls of entrance were about fourteen feet wide, and the superb staircases, with their mahogany hand-rails and balusters were proportionally broad, and gave an air of grandeur to the premises. The dormitories for the fifty or more household servants were in the gable roof.

The present lord of the manor had never been hampered by any of the cares which attend the accumulation of property. His whole life was spent in the enjoyment of it. His mother was an accomplished Englishwoman, the daughter of Governor Sparks of Barbadoes.[2] He had been

[1] In 1779 the Legislature of New York declared Frederick Philipse, the third lord of the manor, attainted of treason, and the manor confiscated. In 1784 the State offered it for sale in tracts to suit purchasers. The manor-house and lands adjoining were bought by Cornelius P. Low of New York, and became the rallying-spot for the village of Yonkers. Low did not occupy the mansion, but sold it again. Prior to 1813 it had had many owners. Then it fell into the hands of Lemuel Wells, who lived in it twenty-nine years. He died childless and intestate, and, leaving no will, his estate was divided among sixteen heirs. Again the building had an uneasy and changeful proprietorship, until about eight years ago, when it was purchased by the corporation of Yonkers, for a City Hall. It was necessary to alter the geography of the northern portion of the interior in order to provide space for a modern court-room. But good sense was displayed in the manner of its accomplishment, and, although the boundary lines of former centuries were obliterated in that particular part, yet the south-western apartments have been carefully shielded from modern innovation, and in their antique garments are among the last links which connect us with the remote period of tomahawks and scalping-knives.

[2] Frederick Philipse, the first lord of the manor, was born about 1626, at Bolswaert in Friesland. He married, in 1662, Margaret Hardenbrook, the widow of Peter Rudolphus De Vries, who had one child, Eve, at the time of her marriage with Philipse, and who was adopted by Philipse as his own. After the death of this lady, Philipse married (in 1692) Catharine, daughter of Oloff S. Van Cortlandt, and widow of John Derval. Philipse died in 1702. His children were, Eve (as above), Philip, Adolphe, and Annetje. Eve married Jaco-

Hosted by Google

thoroughly educated under her immediate supervision, and had spent much of his early life in Europe. He married an English wife, Joanna, the daughter of Lieutenant-Governor Anthony Brockholls. He presided over his tenants and serfs like a right royal old feudal sovereign. He occupied in person the bench of the court-leet and court-baron of the manor (courts which were held in a building that stood on the site of the present Getty House in Yonkers), and took cognizance of criminal matters, administering justice and not infrequently capital punishment. He feasted his tenants on the two great rent-days, — one at Yonkers and the other at Sleepy Hollow. In lieu of rent, a couple of fat hens or a day's work was often received. The farmers near the river paid higher rates, from being guaranteed greater privileges.

The city establishment of Philipse was as pretentious as the manor-hall, and it was where the courtly aristocracy of the province were wont to meet in gay and joyous throng. Philipse was polished in his manners, hospitable, generous, cordial, manly. He had little taste for politics, and yet he mixed somewhat in public life. He represented Philipseborough for many years in the Assembly, and he was for a long period the baron and second judge of the Exchequer. Notwithstanding his Dutch ancestry on his father's side he was ardently attached to the Church of England. It was through the provisions in his will that St. John's Church in Yonkers was afterwards erected by the family; a glebe of two hundred and fifty acres of excellent land was also appropriated to the use of the church, and a parsonage built for the minister.[1]

bus Van Cortlandt, the younger brother of her step-mother; Annetje married Philip French. Adolphe never married. Philip, the elder son, went to Barbadoes, where he married the daughter of Governor Sparks. He died some two years before his father, leaving an only son, Frederick, who subsequently became the second lord of the manor. *Long Island Hist. Soc. Coll.*, Vol. I. 362, 365. Mrs. Catharine Van Cortlandt Philipse lived more than a quarter of a century after her husband's death. She was chiefly instrumental (in 1699) in building the church at Sleepy Hollow, nearly opposite Castle Philipse, which was done at the expense of herself and husband; it is now supposed to be the oldest church edifice in the State. While superintending the work, she was in the habit of riding up from the city on horseback, mounted on a pillion behind her favorite brother, Jacobus Van Cortlandt. See page 305.

[1] Frederick Philipse, the second lord of the manor, died in 1751. The first minister called to St. John's Church was Rev. Harry Munro, a man of ability and learning, a fine classical scholar, and versed in French, Italian, Hebrew, and Erse; while his theological attainments were exceptionally good. He was the son of Robert Munro, of Dingwall, near Inverness, Scotland, who was great-grandson of Sir Robert Munro, twenty-fourth Baron of Fowlis, and third Baronet by his first wife. He came to this country (in 1757) as chaplain of one of the regiments specially raised for service in the colonies against the French. He was with the expedition against Fort Duquesne (Pittsburg), and he was present at the taking of Ticonderoga and Crown Point. He was with the army until 1762. He went to Yonkers about 1765. He married for his third wife (March 31, 1766) Eve, daughter of Peter Jay and Mary Van Cortlandt (Mary Van Cortlandt was the daughter of Jacobus Van Cortlandt and Eve

Hosted by Google

His children received every advantage in the way of instruction which it was in the power of wealthy parents to bestow. His elder son, Frederick (who became the third and last lord of the manor), was graduated at King's College in New York. He grew up an ardent Churchman, and opened his purse generously to all charitable purposes. His tastes were literary. He took very little part in public affairs, although he was a member of the Assembly for several years. He was known as a scholarly gentleman of the old school and an ornament in polite society. He lived in a style of magnificence exceeding all of his predecessors. The manor-house was furnished anew, and on every side there was costly and showy display. His wife was an imperious woman of fashion. It is said that it was her pride to appear upon the roads of Westchester, skillfully reining four splendid jet-black steeds with her own hands. She was killed by a fall from her carriage a short time before the Revolution. Her husband was one of those who tried to maintain so strict a neutrality in the commencement of the great struggle as to protect his property. But he failed. He was at heart a loyalist, and had no faith in the success of the American arms. He was very soon suspected of favoring the British, and compelled to seek safety in the city until the end of the war. He was, however, at the manor-hall until after the battle of White Plains, and Washington and his generals spent several nights under his terraced roof. It is said Washington occupied the southwestern chamber. It is an immense room, and has an old-fashioned Dutch fireplace with jambs about three feet deep, faced in blue and white tile, bearing scriptural illustrations and appropriate references. The chimney (now almost two hundred years old) is of peculiarly quaint construction, and has a secret passage-way from this apartment to some underground retreat, the object of which can only be conjectured. The bricks of which it was built were imported from Holland.

Philipse (the second lord) had three lovely and accomplished daughters, of whom Susan married Colonel Beverly Robinson, the son of Hon. John Robinson of Virginia, the president of that colony on the retirement of Governor Gooch. The bride received a handsome estate from her father, on the Hudson, opposite West Point, where, in 1750, they erected a romantic dwelling for a summer home. It was fashioned according to the prevailing style of country-seats in England at that period; its entrance-

Philipse), and sister of Sir James Jay (M. D.) and Chief Justice John Jay. Their only child was Peter Jay Munro, the celebrated lawyer; he married Margaret, daughter of Henry White and Eve Van Cortlandt (Eve Van Cortlandt was the daughter of Frederick Van Cortlandt and Frances Jay, and granddaughter of Jacobus Van Cortlandt), and of his daughters Frances became the wife of Bishop De Lancey, Harriet of Augustus Frederick Van Cortlandt, and Ann of Elias Desbrosses Hunter. — *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, IV. 123.

Hosted by Google

hall was immensely broad, and its apartments stately, although the ceilings were low. The carving and the tiles were of unique pattern. Gardens, lawns, fruit-orchards, highly cultivated fields, and great deer-parks soon surrounded the home of the military scholar, and, in deference to the family of his mother, the bride named the estate "Beverley." It was for the next twenty-five years the abode of a generous and courtly hospitality. Robinson was a major in the British army, under General Wolfe, and fought with heroic courage on the Plains of Abraham. When the Revolutionary controversy commenced, he opposed the measures of the Ministry, gave up the use of imported merchandise, and clad himself and his family in fabrics of domestic manufacture. But he opposed also the separation of the colonies from the mother country. He was not a native-born citizen of America. He was a retired officer of the king's forces, liable to be called upon at any time in case of war. His idea of a soldier's first duty was obedience to superior authority. Hence, although he greatly desired to take a neutral part when hostilities broke out, the contrary pressure was so strong that he yielded, and removed his family to his city mansion, whence they took refuge in Great Britain at the close of the war.[1] His immense estate was confiscated by the Legislature of the State, and sold.

Mary Philipse, the younger sister of Mrs. Robinson, was born at the manor-house in 1730. She was the brilliant young lady who captivated Washington, when he was the guest of Colonel Robinson at the New York mansion of the latter, in 1756, while on his horseback journey from Virginia to Boston. Whether the stylish Virginia colonel was backward about coming forward, or whether he was actually rejected by the beautiful belle, will ever remain a question. Colonel Roger Morris was the favored suitor, and shortly afterward the fashion, the rank, the beauty, and the scholarship of the capital were assembled at the manor-hall in Yonkers to celebrate the bridal. Morris had been a fellow-soldier with Washing-

[1] The children of Colonel Beverly Robinson all attained distinction. Beverley was Lieutenant-Colonel in the British army, and settled at St. John's, New Brunswick, where he became President of the Royal Council. He died in New York City in 1816. John was a member of the Royal Council, and treasurer of New Brunswick; also mayor of St. Johns, and president of the first bank ever chartered in that colony. Sir Frederick passed through all the gradations of army rank, commanded a brigade at the battle of Vittoria, at the siege of St. Sebastian, and at the passage of the Niévre; he was commander-in-chief of the Canadian forces in the War of 1812, and was appointed governor of Upper Canada in 1815, at the same time receiving the order of knighthood. He was afterwards advanced to the Order of the Bath. He visited Beverly in his mature manhood, and is said to have shed tears while regarding with profound admiration the beauties which encompassed his birthplace. Sir William Henry was knighted by the king for valuable services rendered to the English government. His wife was the daughter of Cortlandt Skinner of New Jersey.

Hosted by Google

ton on the field of Monongahela, where Braddock fell, in the summer of 1755. He built, shortly after his marriage, the fine old mansion at One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Street, which was the residence (until her death in 1865) of the widow of Aaron Burr, Vice-President of the United States, known as Madame Jumel. It was surrounded by highly ornamented grounds, and its situation, from its commanding view of the Harlem River at High Bridge, to Long Island Sound and beyond, was one of the finest and most attractive on Manhattan Island. Morris adhered to the crown after the Declaration of Independence in 1776, and when, in the autumn of that year, the American army under Washington encamped upon Harlem Heights and occupied Fort Washington, he fled to Beverly for safety, and Washington made the handsome Morris mansion his headquarters for



Roger Morris Mansion.

a time. The estate of Adolphe Philipse reverted at his death to his nephew, the second lord of the manor. At the death of the latter the land in Putnam County was divided between his younger children. The part around and including Lake Mahopac fell to Mary (Philipse), Mrs. Roger Morris. She was in the habit of visiting her tenants in that region semi-yearly, up to the time of the Revolution, and was very much beloved by them. She occupied the little log-house of her great-uncle at first; but she finally caused to be erected a much larger and better structure of logs, where she passed several weeks every season. This log-house is still in existence, a

Hosted by Google

frame-house having been built around it. It is occupied by a man so aged that he can distinctly remember when boats could sail from the Hudson River through Canal Street, in New York City, to the Fresh Water Pond in Centre Street. It is near the famous "Red Mill," which was built by the Philipse tenants in 1745, some giving timber, some boards, and some labor, as it was esteemed of great importance to have a place to grind the grain which was raised in this remote country. The loft of the mill was used as a church for many years, and Mrs. Morris always attended divine service there whenever on a visit to her tenants. During the Revolution the mill was converted into a storehouse for the American army, and Mrs. Morris's log-house was more than once occupied by Washington, and was the scene of many tragic events.

A slice of the Philipse estate bordering upon the Harlem River (extending towards Yonkers) had been conveyed by the first lord of the manor to Jacobus Van Cortlandt,[1] the husband of his eldest daughter, Eve.

[1] Oloff S. Van Cortlandt (the first Van Cortlandt in this country) was married to Ann, the sister of Govert Loockermans, in the Dutch Church, New York, February 26, 1642. Their children were, 1, Stephanus, born 1643, married Gertrude Schuyler; 2, Maria, married Jeremias Van Rensselaer; 3, John, died unmarried; 4, Sophia, married Andrew Teller; 5, Catharine, married John Derval, afterwards Frederick Philipse; 6, Cornelia, married Brandt Schuyler; 7, Jacobus, born 1658, married Eve Philipse.

Stephanus Van Cortlandt and Gertrude Schuyler's children were, 1, John, married Anne Sophia Van Schaack, and left an only daughter, Gertrude, who married Philip Verplanck; 2, Anne, who married Stephen De Lancey; 3, Margaret, who married Samuel Bayard; 4, Oliver, who died unmarried; 5, Maria, who married Kilian Van Rensselaer, the fourth patroon of Rensselaerswick, and the first grantee of the manor under the English patent in 1704; 6, Gertrude, died young; 7, Philip, married Catharine De Peyster; 8, Stephanus, married Catalina Staats; 9, Gertrude, married Colonel Henry Beekman; 10, Gysbert, died unmarried; 11, Elizabeth, died young; 12, Elizabeth (born 1694), married Rev. William Skinner, the first rector of St. Peter's Church, Perth Amboy. His true name was McGregor; he was one of the clan proscribed for supporting the Old Pretender in 1715. He changed his name, came to America, and became an Episcopal clergyman. His oldest son was Cortlandt Skinner, whose daughter married Sir William Henry Robinson, of "Beverly"; his youngest son, William Skinner, married his cousin, Susan, daughter of Admiral Sir Peter Warren and Susan De Lancey; 13, Catharine, married Andrew Johnston, second son of Dr. John Johnston, speaker of the New Jersey Assembly and member of the governor's council of New Jersey. 14, Cornelia (born 1698), married Colonel John Schuyler, the son of John Schuyler, the younger brother of Hon. Peter Schuyler. Colonel John Schuyler and Cornelia Van Cortlandt were the parents of the celebrated General Philip Schuyler of the American Revolution.

Jacobus Van Cortlandt (the ancestor of the Van Cortlandts of Yonkers, the youngest branch of the Van Cortlandt family) and Eve Philipse's children were, Margaret, married Abraham De Peyster, Jr., Treasurer of New York province forty-six years; Anne, married Judge John Chambers; Mary, married Peter Jay; and Frederick married Frances Jay.

Philip Van Cortlandt (who lived at the manor) and Catharine De Peyster's children were, 1, Stephen (born in 1711), married Mary Walton Ricketts; 2, Abraham, died unmarried; 3, Philip, died unmarried; 4, John, died unmarried; 5, Pierre (born 1721), first lieutenant-governor of New York as a State, and ancestor of the present Van Cortlandts of Cort-

Hosted by Google

The great substantial country-house, now standing, was built upon this property in 1748, by Frederick Van Cortlandt, who had married Frances Jay.[1]

It was a weary drive from Kingsbridge to the city, the roads not being cared for in the best manner, and Clinton was overtaken on his wintry journey (it was late in the autumn) by a driving northeastern storm of sleet and rain, which occasioned an attack of rheumatic gout from which he did not recover for months. His family were sick at the same time, and he wrote dolorous accounts of the general health of the people to his friends in England, which created an unfavorable impression concerning the climate of New York. Fevers had indeed prevailed to an alarming extent during the season, also the small-pox. But an old certificate, signed in the presence of the justices of the peace — Gerardus Stuyvesant, William Roome, Simon Johnson, John Marshall, and Stephen Van Cortlandt — by the physicians of New York, shows that about the middle of October the sickness had materially abated. The names of those who were practicing medicine in the city, in 1745, were Doctors Archibald Fisher, William Beekman, Isaac Du Bois, Roelof Kiersted, John Van Bueren, E. B. Kemmena, Abraham Van Vleck, William Heweot, William Blake, David Hay, Alexander Moore, William Brownjohn, and Joseph Bruning.

The House was in session when the governor arrived, and although in great bodily suffering he reported the demand made upon New York for assistance by the other colonies, and the temper of the Indians. He recommended the raising of money for building forts along the frontiers, for equipping a guard-ship to defend the coast, for fitting out an expedition against Crown Point, for providing provisions for the Oswego garrison, for more money to strengthen the hands of the commissioners, for the punctual payment of the militia, and for a thousand and one contingent expenses.

The response was slow and measured. Why must so weighty a burden be borne by New York? The members of the Assembly were nearly all rich men, and consequently large tax-payers. The bleeding process was becoming painful. England ought to come to the rescue.

landt Manor, married Joanna Livingston ; 6, Catharine (born in 1725), was killed by the bursting of a cannon at the Battery.

[1] The children of Frederick Van Cortlandt and Frances Jay were, James, married Elizabeth Cuyler ; Frederick, died unmarried ; Augustus, married Helen Barclay ; Ann, married Nathaniel Marston, afterwards Augustus Van Horne ; Eve, married Henry White.

Augustus Van Cortlandt and Helen Barclay's children were, Ann, who married her cousin, Henry White, the son of Henry White and Eve Van Cortlandt ; and Helen, who married James Morris of Morrisania.

Hosted by Google

Clinton wrote to the Lords that the Assembly was extremely backward in promoting any public good; he said: "While so many Dutch prevail in the province, I can have but little hopes of succeeding in any enterprise, though ever so well concerted, unless they are compelled to do their duty more cheerfully by a superior power." He intimated that the Dutch of Albany wanted to maintain neutrality with the French savages for purposes of trade, and actually exchanged ammunition with them for skins while the same wretches were murdering the New England people in the most shocking manner. He charged Philip Livingston, in particular, with having been engaged in the nefarious business. He urged the British Ministry to take cognizance of the "disobedience and indolence of the New York Assembly."

1746. In the spring Clinton begged to be allowed to return to England for the recovery of his health. His hearing and eyesight were very much impaired, and he had lost strength and flesh. One of his children had died, and a son, who had been afflicted with fever and ague for ten months, had already sailed for Europe. The Assembly treated him with disrespect, and the counselors were ill-natured. The government was not likely to fill his purse, and he was heartily disgusted with New York.

But he did not obtain relief just then. The proceedings of the French were such as to create wide-spread alarm throughout the colonies, and the absolute necessity of energetic warfare became clear to every mind. Governors Shirley of Massachusetts, Wolcott of Connecticut, Morris of New Jersey, and others, were in constant communication with Clinton, and each other, and a gigantic project was maturing. Each colony had petitioned the crown for help, and the promise of help finally came.

Meanwhile Governor Lewis Morris finished his earthly career at the advanced age of seventy-three. He was interred, according to his directions in the family vault at Morrisania. The funeral cortège left Trenton

May 26. on the 26th of May, and reached Amboy the same evening, where a small vessel was in waiting, which conveyed the remains to Morrisania. The pall-bearers were Chief Justice De Lancey, James Alexander, William Smith, Abraham De Peyster (the treasurer), Joseph Murray, Robert Walters, David Clarkson, and Lewis Johnston. The last rites were performed by Rev. Dr. Standard, rector of the parish of Westchester.

Governor Morris had directed, among other things, some time before his death, that his remains should be placed in a plain coffin, without covering or lining; and he had prohibited the giving of rings or scarfs at his funeral, or the wearing of mourning garments by any of his family on

Hosted by Google

his account, as it was an unnecessary expense, which the indigent would attempt to imitate. He ordered, also, that no man should be paid for preaching a funeral sermon for him, but if any one, churchman, dissenting minister, or otherwise, felt inclined to say anything on the occasion he should have no objection.[1]

With the joyful tidings that the king approved of the aggressive measures against the French, and that the colonial forces would be joined by regular troops from England, the Assembly smiled with exultation. Impecuniosity gave way to generous impulses. A grand effort was made to further the important design. Bounties were raised for volunteers, and large sums were appropriated to purchase ammunition, provisions, etc. For immediate convenience there was a new emission of paper money.

Stephen Bayard and Edward Holland from the Council were deputed to superintend the building of a fleet of bateaux, which was esteemed essential for the navigation of Lakes George and Champlain. They reported, on the 6th of July, that the naval architects refused to work under pretense of prior engagements, whereupon the House enacted a law authorizing the impressment into the public service of all artificers, and their servants, whose assistance might be required, together with horses, wagons, and anything else needful for the success of the enterprise.

The Assembly hesitated at nothing until it came to the providing of equipments, provisions, and transportation of military stores for the Indian service, and then it firmly refused to advance money to the crown, even upon loan, prefering to raise the same by bills of exchange. A grand council was about to be convened at Albany for the common benefit of all the exposed colonies, and the members of the House could see no reason why each colony should not contribute towards the heavy expenses for presents, clothing, arms, and subsistence for the savage allies, — who always fought for honor, scouting the idea of going upon the war-path for pay, and yet must have incentives to action upon a liberal scale.

The session closed on the 15th of July, but not until a joint congratulatory address from the two Houses had been voted to the king. The committee from the Upper House who prepared the July 15.

[1] From the Diary of Judge Lewis Morris (the governor's son), under date of May 30, the following is extracted: "Sent back the chaises to Harlem that we borrowed for the burial. There was one quarter cask of wine expended at the funeral, to about two dozen bottles, and about two gallons of rum, a barrel of cider and two barrels of beer." *Bolton's Westchester. Papers of Governor Lewis Morris. New Jersey Historical Collections.* Governor Lewis Morris donated the timber for the building of Trinity Church, and the vestry granted the family a square pew.

Hosted by Google

document were, Philip Livingston, Chief Justice De Lancey, and Judge Horsemanden.

It was now midsummer, and the colonies were ready for immediate action. The militia had left their ripening harvests, and with
July 21. their muskets loaded, were awaiting the order of march. But neither troops nor other aid had arrived from across the water; not even a message of encouragement. The inaction of the parent government, from which much had been promised and more expected, was regarded with dismay. Its co-operation was absolutely essential to the execution of the vast scheme in progress, and the fiery ambition with which the provinces had hurried their preparations in order to accomplish grand and hoped-for results before winter, resolved into deep chagrin.

Clinton, however, proceeded, according to arrangement, to meet the Six Nations in Albany. He was at loggerheads with his counselors, and only three of them could be induced to accompany him on this mission, — Philip Livingston, Dr. Colden, and John Rutherford. And of these Livingston and Rutherford were sworn personal foes. But Livingston was deeply interested in transactions of whatever nature with the Indians, and Major Rutherford was already in Albany on military duty. To Clinton's great surprise there were no Indians in Albany to meet him, except two straggling Onondagas and one Oneida warrior! They brought as trophies two French scalps, which they said they had taken at noonday within sight of the French fort at Crown Point. The leader of the three made a speech to the governor, after which he was rewarded for his bravery with a fine laced coat and hat, a silver breastplate, and a new name, — *Path-opener*. Each of his companions received four Spanish dollars, a blanket, and a laced hat. The reports from the messengers who had been sent to invite the Six Nations to the council were so discouraging that Path-opener, proud of his distinction, volunteered upon an embassy to bring the Indians to Albany.

Other scouts came, reporting large numbers of French and Indians at Crown Point, and at various points. Sixteen Mohawks sent to reconnoitre the works of the enemy by Sir William Johnson, brought the unpleasant intelligence that the French were making extensive preparations to attack Schenectady, and the other white settlements in the Mohawk Valley, and probably Albany, and that there was an appearance of some private understanding between the Six Nations and the French Indians about Montreal. Sir William wrote to the governor that there were serious grounds for alarm; that the white settlers, for twenty miles above him and below Schenectady; had fled from the country, and that his own property — of which he named eleven thousand bushels of wheat and other

Hosted by Google

grain — was in jeopardy. Clinton sent a detachment of thirty men to his assistance, and a militia company to the upper Mohawk castle for the protection of the Indians. To increase the embarrassment of the governor, news came from Shirley that the Atlantic seaboard was threatened by a French invasion.

For nearly a month the prospect of procuring a general attendance of Indians was far from flattering. The temper of the Six Nations was bad. The war, they said, was between the English and French; it was none of their quarrel. If they began to fight there was no rest for them until either they or their foes were swept from off the face of the earth. "The treacherous rascals!" exclaimed Colden, "I have no doubt that some of the chiefs have already pledged themselves to the crafty Jesuit ecclesiastics."

Colden started at once for the Mohawk castles, where he had spent some time twenty years before, and been adopted into their clan and invested with an Indian name, and with the assistance of the Rev. Mr. Barclay, at last persuaded three of the sachems who had been on a visit to the governor of Canada, to sustain the cause of the English. At the same time, Sir William Johnson, by request of Clinton, was laboring with the other chiefs. He assumed their dress, painted himself, feasted them, set them to teaching him how to dance their war-dances, and entered into all their athletic exercises and games. The savages were flattered, and adopted him as their war-chief. When they finally consented to go to Albany, a political feud arose among themselves, and they separated, one party marching on one side of the river and the other on the opposite side. As they neared Albany, Johnson put himself at their head, dressed, painted, and plumed, as required by the dignity of his rank as Indian chieftain. When they passed the Albany fort, salutes were exchanged, the Indians firing their muskets and the fort its artillery. Johnson and the sachems were afterwards received in the great hall of the fortress, and served with wine and other refreshments.

All sorts of private maneuvering with individual chiefs was found necessary to induce them to declare war against the French.[1] It was a critical moment indeed. There were many difficulties to be adjusted before the opening of the Council. Meantime Clinton had been attacked by fever, and the duty of conducting the conference devolved upon Colden. Commissioners from Massachusetts were present, also

Aug. 19.

[1] The Indian Chiefs were admonished that they must guard against the treacherous wiles of the French priests, and told that their friends, the English, were now going to wipe away the sorrowful tears of the Six Nations; and some of the chiefs replied, that their blood boiled at the way in which they had been treated by the wicked priests, and that henceforth they should have no further use for them, only for roasting.

Hosted by Google

the Commissioners of Indian Affairs, and the mayor and corporation of Albany; among the latter were Myndert Schuyler, Cornelius Cuyler, Nicholas Bleecker, Stevanus Groesbeeck, and John De Peyster.[1] Colden delivered an eloquent and carefully prepared speech, explaining the marvelous feats which the English were about to perform, and at the end of each sentence one of the chiefs called out, "YO-HAY, — *Do you hear?*" and a low guttural of approbation came from the whole assemblage. When Colden took his seat the war-belt was thrown down, and the significant act was followed by a war-shout. Three days afterward the sachems responded satisfactorily; and in the course of two or three days, presents had been lavishly distributed, the war-dance had been performed in the presence of the governor and other distinguished gentlemen, — the warriors all painted, — and appropriate songs had closed the entertainment. The Indians started for their homes in fine spirits, but the small-pox broke out among them on the journey, and many died, among whom were two energetic chiefs who had promised to enlist the far Indians in favor of the English. Aug. 24.

Clinton remained in Albany a month longer, and conferred with the Stockbridge, the Susquehanna, and other tribes of Indians. In the mean time the savages in the French service kept the New England frontier and the eastern border of New York, in one continuous state of alarm; houses and barns were burned, and fields reddened with blood. The most conspicuous demonstration of the enemy during the season was about the middle of August, when a force of regular troops and Indians, numbering over nine hundred, descended upon Fort Massachusetts, the bulwark of the Berkshire Hills and the headquarters of Colonel Ephraim Williams, the commander of the posts in that region. The fort stood in a long low meadow, commanded by heights in every direction. Its site is now designated by a lone tree, and is about half-way between the beautiful towns of Williamstown — the seat of Williams College, which was founded by Colonel Ephraim Williams — and North Adams. The fort was unfavorably situated for defense, and the little garrison, consisting of only eleven men able to do duty (eleven were sick), under John Hawks, were lamentably short of ammunition. Indeed, Thomas Williams, with thirteen

[1] John De Peyster was the grandson of Johannes De Peyster, born in New York January 14, 1694. He married Anne Schuyler, and settled in Albany. He had two daughters, Anne, who married Volkert P. Donow, and Rachel, who married Tobias Ten Eyck. He was Recorder of the city of Albany from 1716 to 1728, and mayor from 1729 to 1732. In 1734 he became one of the Commissioners of Indian Affairs; he was subsequently a contractor with the government to supply Oswego and other outposts with stores, and, in 1755, was one of the commissioners for paying the forces in the expedition in which Johnson defeated Dieskau.

Hosted by Google

men, had just started on a secret tour through the wilderness to Deerfield, for supplies — Colonel Williams himself was at Albany with the greater part of his soldiers, under orders to march with the expedition to conquer Canada. The little band of eleven resisted the nine hundred as long as a spoonful of powder was left in the fort; the defense was one of the most gallant affairs, of its magnitude, on record. Hawks surrendered, finally, to the French commander, M. Vaudreuil, who offered honorable terms of capitulation; the latter laughed dryly when he found his prisoners numbered only eight effective men, — three having been killed during the siege, — but he and his officers treated the gallant young sergeant as brave men are prone to treat the brave. The Indians, however, were irritated at the smallness of the booty, and butchered all the sick and infirm, and set fire to the fort;[1] the remainder of the prisoners, including two women, and several children, were carried to Crown Point, and from thence to Canada. Sir William Gooch, governor of Virginia, had been commissioned by the crown to command the Canadian expedition, and had declined; hence Clinton was in actual command of the forces gathered at Albany. He was severely censured for his negligence in not having employed rangers to scour the forests and watch the motions of the enemy, when it was discovered that so large a force had been led through the country, and actually besieged Fort Massachusetts for over forty-eight hours, within forty miles of Albany, without the fact being known until some time after the invaders had retired. There was more than one among the counselors and legislators who attributed it to penuriousness, and some were so bold as to say that the money which should have been expended in such service went into the private purse of the governor.

All this time no news came from Boston or from England. The summer had passed away, and of course the best season for active military operations against Crown Point and Canada. Disappointment settled like a pall over Albany. Finally letters came from General Shirley and from Admiral Sir Peter Warren. New England was absorbed in the defense of the coasts, and England had failed in every engagement. No fleet, no troops, no Sir John Sinclair, to lead the colonies on to victory. It only remained for New York to prepare winter quarters for the soldiers, and adopt plans for guarding against the murderous attacks of the foe.

[1] Colonel Williams rebuilt Fort Massachusetts the next year; he was attacked, while so doing, by a large party of the enemy, who came with the intention of hindering his operations, but were repulsed with heavy loss. In 1748 it was the scene of another sharp fight. After the peace of that year was concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle, the General Court of Massachusetts granted to Colonel Williams a large tract of land in that vicinity. On the commencement of hostilities in 1755, he was ordered with his command to join Sir William Johnson, and fell in the attack upon Dieskau near Lake George.

Hosted by Google

Clinton did not get on well with the Indian commissioners. He was surly and they were opinionated. His policy differed from their notions. He was unyielding, and several of them declined to attend the council. He finally displaced Colonel Schuyler (the son of Hon. Peter Schuyler), and placed Sir William Johnson at the head of the Indian Department.

Oct. 14. He returned to New York early in October. He found the Assembly ripe for a quarrel. There was talk about gross mismanagement on the part of the governor, and Colden was criticised for the part he had taken in conducting affairs with the Indians. Clinton

Oct. 17. was indisposed, and, instead of opening the session in person, sent for the speaker, and through him transmitted a copy of his message to the House. This procedure was voted irregular and unprecedented. The message itself created a tempest. It called for subsistence for the winter encampment at Albany, and for larger appropriations in every direction. It contained subtle hints relative to distrusts that were being fomented by artful, designing men; and admonitions to the effect that one branch of the government should not wantonly encroach upon the prerogatives of other branches of the government.

Frederick Philipse, Judge Lewis Morris, David Clarkson, Henry Cruger, and Colonel Schuyler were the committee to draft a reply. They said that larger appropriations had been voted already than even the king had expected. They disapproved of the winter encampment, as the soldiers could not be made comfortable in Albany, and sickness and desertion would inevitably follow. They proposed to enter upon a full investigation of the Indian branch of the public service as soon as the papers and documents relating to it should be placed before the Assembly, and until then no larger sum than usual would be voted for that department, "*lest there be further misconduct.*" They threw back into the governor's face the insinuations respecting the influence of artful and designing men, by remarking, pointedly, that if such persons had been infusing distrust into his Excellency's mind, they must have sinister ends in view, and could be no friends to the country. As for encroaching upon the prerogatives of others they designed nothing of the kind; the troubles which had hitherto arisen in the colony had resulted from the bad advice given by designing men to the governors, and not from any wanton stretch of power by the people. They referred to the recent vote of the sum of £6,500 for the subsistence of the troops at Albany, and, in addition to the civil list, of the provision for paying the deficient bounty-money. Beyond that, "the circumstances of the colony (of which they were the most competent judges) would not suffer them to take one step further."

Hosted by Google

Chief Justice De Lancey, in whom Clinton had reposed great confidence during the first years of his administration,[1] was now the active head of the opposition. De Lancey had disapproved of Clinton's determination to demand an independent support for a term of years in place of the annual provision accorded by the Assembly. He had given vigorous advice upon other subjects which Clinton swallowed ungraciously. Certain members of the Council holding different opinions from the chief justice privately counseled the governor to maintain the dignity of his station, and not allow an inferior to domineer over him.

One day Clinton and De Lancey were dining together, and grew very warm over the discussion of some of the vexed questions of state. De Lancey insisted upon a favorite point with an imperious air, and Clinton, losing all patience, declared that he should not be driven. De Lancey retorted that he would make the administration uneasy for his Excellency in the future, and took his leave. Clinton's parting words were, "You may do your worst." And the two were never afterwards reconciled.

No man in New York prior to the Revolution wielded greater influence than Chief Justice De Lancey. He was an intellectual giant. His breadth of knowledge, culture, magnetic presence, vivacity, wit, condescension to inferiors, and charming good-nature made him a general favorite with all classes. But, extremely affable as he was under ordinary circumstances, — when it was his humor, — he was haughty and overbearing whenever he was thwarted in his purposes, and his anger was fierce and unrelenting. He could not with grace tolerate opinions differing from his own; implicit and unreasoning acquiescence in his views was the price of his friendship; and to such friends he knit himself with hooks of steel; there was no service in his power he would not render them, and they served him with a zeal which indicated the marvelous strength of his nature. His bearing was princely. He would have been pointed out in any promiscuous assembly as a man born to command. His enormous wealth rendered him an object of interest to the multitude. They pinned their faith to his honesty, because he could have no possible motive for stealing the public money. He was not a foreign invader seeking to enrich himself with the surplus earnings of the hard-working pioneers of the country. He was their friend and champion. His snow-white horses and gilded chariot with outriders in handsome livery excited no envy; his grand old mansion on Broadway and his still

[1] Clinton presented De Lancey, of his own accord, a new commission of chief justice for life, dated September 14, 1744, in place of his former one, the tenure of which was only "during pleasure."

Hosted by Google

more elegant country-seat were objects of pride to the inhabitants of the city. The latter was on the Bowery road above Grand Street. The house stood in the rear of the block between Rivington and De Lancey Streets. It was a broad stately brick building, three stories high, expensively furnished, and contained a generous and well-chosen library; the walls of the apartments were embellished with choice works of art, and it was otherwise invested with the refined tastes of him who built and beautified it. An avenue shaded on either side by handsome trees, which in summer time formed a leafy arch overhead, led from the mansion to the Bowery Road. The estate spread over an incredible number of acres. The map of the same, sketched by De Lancey while lieutenant-governor of New York, and perfected by his son, James De Lancey, illustrates the symmetry of his plans in regard to the future laying out of streets.[1] The attractive square which appears on the map disappeared when the property was confiscated by the State, and sold in lots to suit purchasers.

Colden, henceforward, became the governor's confidential adviser and staunch supporter. He, no less than De Lancey, was a man of genius and power. Indeed, his erudition quite surpassed the age in which he lived, and the brilliant qualities of his mind shone like the sun among stars.[2] He possessed sound judgment, and was honored and respected by the community at large. He was a small, high-shouldered, plain-faced man, with few personal graces, but his iron will was fully equal to that of his brilliant rival. Indeed, while unlike in almost every respect except irritability of temper, the two formidable adversaries were well matched.

James Alexander and William Smith, who had been formerly so valiant in the popular interest, were now squared about, as it were, for they had never been on cordial terms with the chief justice since the Zenger trial.[3] They stood by Colden, and Colden managed Clinton.

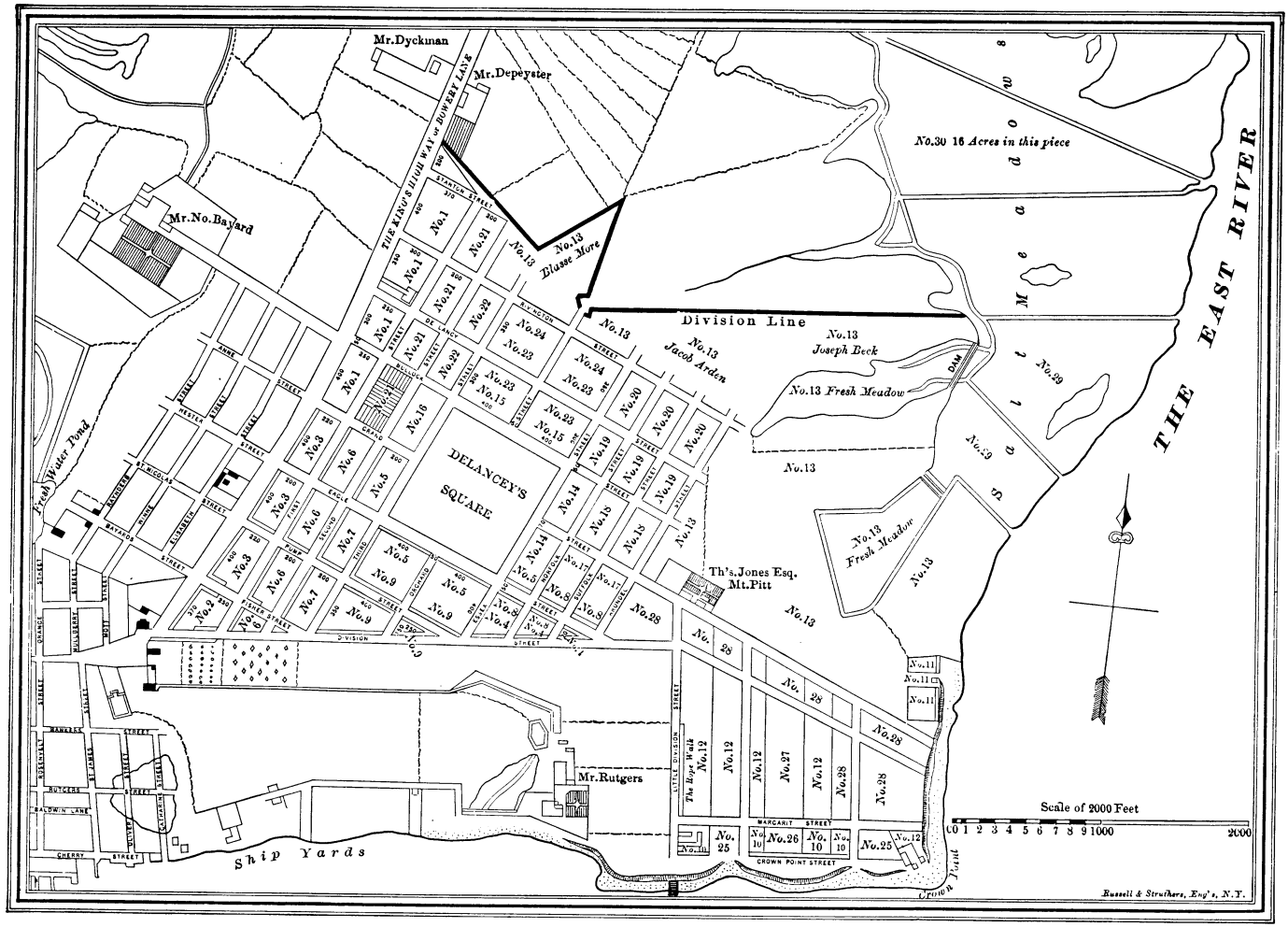
[1] Copied through the courtesy of Edward F. De Lancey.

[2] Colden was a physician, a botanist, an astronomer, and a historian.

[3] James Alexander resided the greater part of the year at his country-seat—his "plentifull estate," as Clinton termed it in writing to the Duke of Newcastle—in New Jersey, near Perth Amboy. That he should have failed in meeting regularly with the council in New York is no matter of surprise, when we consider what were the traveling facilities at that date. A "stage-wagon" crossed New Jersey between New Brunswick and Trenton once a week as early as 1742 (and even before), which appears from a humorous complaint of Governor Morris, about the mode in which a box of beer bottles had been sent him: "Whereas at New York it was first landed, then carted up the Broad-way, then down again to the water side, then put on board a boat to New Brunswick, and then carted thirty miles to this place." In 1744, arrangements were made for the "stage-wagon" to run *twice* a week; and in 1750, a new line was established, connecting New York with Philadelphia by the same route, with a "stage-boat."

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google



JAMES DE LANCEY'S MS. MAP OR PLAN OF HIS BOWERY FARM
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK AS IT WAS AT THE TIME OF THE REVOLUTION.
Reduced from original in possession of Ed.F.de Lancey.
The East line of the Bowery and the red lines denote the exterior boundaries of the Farm.

Hosted by Google

Meantime the House became intensely excited over the news that the high sheriff of Albany, by order of Colonel Roberts,[1] an officer of one of the independent companies, had broken open the storehouses in that city, and taken into custody a large quantity of provisions for the soldiers. Colden himself had sanctioned the act, after in vain trying to induce the commissioners to obey the direct orders of the governor, and issue supplies for the hungry troops. The House at once adopted a resolution approving of the conduct of the commissioners; and another declaring both Roberts and the high sheriff guilty of a high misdemeanor; and several others, among which was one declaring Dr. Colden guilty of high

In the announcement the proprietor states that passages are made in *forty-eight hours* less time than by any other line; but he does not state how long it requires to accomplish the whole journey from New York to Philadelphia. The following year, the enterprise having proved successful, he again advertises his *fast* line, and promises to "endeavor to use people in the best manner, and not keep them more than five days on the way." This stirred the Philadelphians into brisk competition, and a "stage-wagon with a good awning" began to run between "Crooked Billet Wharf" and "Amboy Ferry," where a passage boat with a "fine, commodious cabin, fitted up with a tea-table, and sundry other conveniences," conveyed the passenger to the metropolis. It was not until 1765, that the traveler was able to go from New York to Philadelphia in three days. The vehicle then used was a covered Jersey wagon without springs, and was called the "Flying Machine." The roads were rough, and in many instances, particularly in swampy places, were but a mere causeway of logs with gravel thrown over them. Commissioners were appointed to survey and straighten the New Jersey roads in 1765, hoping to shorten the distance between the cities some twelve or fifteen miles; but they found obstacles which were difficult to overcome. Col. John Schuyler, of Belleville, is said to have constructed the first road over the flats between Newark and New York. Brissot de Warville, the French traveler, in 1774, speaks of this highway as a marvelous work. "All the way to Newark (nine miles) is a marshy country," he says, "intersected with rivers; at two miles we cross a cedar swamp, at three miles we intersect the road leading to Bergen, a Dutch town on our right, at five miles we cross the Hackensack River, and finally we cross the Passaic River (coachee and all) in a *scoul* by means of pulling a rope fastened on the opposite side." Of the road itself, he writes, "It is built wholly of wood, with much labor and perseverance, in the midst of water, on a soil that trembles under your feet, and proves to what point may be carried the patience of man who is determined to conquer nature!" The Duke de Rochefoucault traveled over this road, improved, in 1795, and describes it as "very disagreeable to the traveler, and difficult for carriages, being so narrow in some places as not to admit of passing, and extremely rough. It is constructed of trees having their branches cut away, disposed longitudinally, one beside another, and slightly covered with earth." — *Whitehead.*

[1] Colonel Roberts was "Cornet of Horse" at the accession of George I, and was connected by his first marriage to the Earl of Halifax. His second wife was the daughter of Francis Harrison, the counselor at New York. Clinton placed high value upon his services, and recommended him to the favor of the king, because he hazarded his life in many instances for the good of New York, the Governor of Canada having offered a large reward for his scalp.

Hosted by Google

misdemeanor, for attempting by threats to influence officers appointed by law to violate their duty; and another declining to vote any further supplies until an effectual stop should be put to such proceedings, and demanding that the governor should direct the attorney-general to prosecute the delinquents.

It was a peculiar controversy. Each party seemed to feel abundantly justified in its course; and each seemed determined to embarrass the other. The governor explained to the Assembly the necessities of the case, and asked for the future that provisions might be delivered to the army agreeably to the existing engagements of the Assembly, in which event nothing which had happened would ever be repeated. He also pledged that all possible care should be taken of the provisions, and exact accounts rendered.

Dec 4. There was a lull after this, although the better state of feeling had not been reached. Towards the close of the session Chief Justice De Lancey called the attention of both Houses to a pamphlet which had fallen into his hands, giving an account of the late conference with the Indians at Albany, which he said was a misrepresentation of facts, and a reflection upon the absent counselors; he moved that the printer be ordered to appear and confess the author's name. Dr. Colden was in the speaker's chair, and at once stated that he wrote the pamphlet and caused it to be printed, but that he had no intention of casting any reflections upon the other gentlemen. In spite of his apologies, the majority condemned the offensive paragraphs, and passed a resolution that the pamphlet contained odious misrepresentations. Colden told Clinton (who was not present) that the occurrence was an entire surprise to him, and that the gentlemen were all lawyers, and prepared with set speeches, while he was not ready to respond in a proper manner. He was accused of having told the world in print that he was the next man to the governor in the government; and the governor was cautioned against "one of those artful and designing persons who had private views."

While Clinton had been in Albany, the members of the Council who had refused to accompany him had held meetings and transacted business in New York without consulting his Excellency; they had even issued orders to the militia, and corresponded with the neighboring governors, under the style of the Council of the Province. Clinton was humiliated and annoyed, but he was not a master spirit, and if he had been, it is doubtful whether he could have controlled the conflicting elements. The chief men in the two branches of the Legislature were in harmony, and the Assembly had become more arrogant than ever. The

Hosted by Google

governor's blunders were freely commented upon in private circles as well as public places. His want of skill in the art of fortification, as exhibited in the city defenses, was a subject of caustic criticism and much merriment. His love of ease was styled "laziness." He spent much of his time at his country-seat in Flushing, Long Island, entertaining visitors, who partook of his good dinners, and played billiards with his lady.[1] He was really very much out of health. But that fact elicited little sympathy. "Give him plenty of wine and Colden, and he will get well fast enough," said Judge Horsemanden. "How would it do to prescribe a few grains of sense?" asked Colonel Schuyler. "Deadly poison, I assure you; he has never been accustomed to such diet," was the quick retort.

Clinton poured his woes into the ears of Governor Shirley of Massachusetts, and argued against the legislative principle in his letters to the Lords of Trade. He said the Assembly was seeking power and would eventually assume the administration, if the crown did not interfere and sustain its officers; it meddled with military as well as civil affairs, and took upon itself to pass judgment upon what the crown should or should not do. He said that all the minutes and messages of the Assembly were drafted by Horsemanden, with the advice of Chief Justice De Lancey, and one or two others. He wished to remove De Lancey from the Council, but it would be of no use while he was chief justice of the province; would the Lords have the kindness to deprive him of the chief-justiceship, so that his power might be extinguished? As for Horsemanden he could no longer be tolerated. And during subsequent hostilities between Clinton and the Legislature, Horsemanden was suspended from all his offices. James Alexander was appointed to the Council in his stead; and not far from the same time Stephen Bayard was superseded as counselor by Brandt Schuyler.

The winter ended, as it commenced, in unprofitable quarrels and aggravating personalities. The spring opened inauspiciously for New York. The governor demanded more money and more respectful treatment, and intimated his belief that the opulent men of Albany, who had accumulated their riches by trade with Canada, were desirous of preserving the neutrality of the Six Nations, and had actually countenanced the introduction of Roman Catholic emissaries into the colony for treasonable purposes. The troops who had been in service through the 1747.

[1] Mrs. Clinton was greatly superior to her husband; she is spoken of as "an ambitious woman with a clear intellect and strong will." *Smith; Dunlap.* Her son Henry, the British general who figured so conspicuously in the Revolutionary War, inherited her prominent traits of character.

Hosted by Google

winter were clamorous for their pay; the officers at Saratoga were fearful that they would desert in a body. Many had already deserted, and there was serious talk, all along the frontier stations, of mutineering in a body and paying themselves by the plunder of the city and county of Albany. The Assembly declared there had been a large embezzlement of the funds provided for Indian presents in 1745,—£1,000 having been voted, and less than £300 worth of goods having reached their destination,—and that there had been much needless expense incurred in the erection of fortifications for the want of competent engineers. Individuals had profited largely through the appropriations in all branches of the service. Money voted for the building of a chain of block houses had been diverted to the subsistence of detachments of militia posted by the governor upon the frontiers, without consultation with the Assembly. The other exposed colonies had an equal interest with New York in building and sustaining those defenses, and should contribute to the expense, and whenever they were found ready to co-operate in the work of mutual protection the House would vote additional sums as far as might be judged necessary. The imputation against the people of Albany was resented; the governor had been misled in his opinions by "men of wrong heads and worse hearts, who were screening themselves behind the curtain," and intriguing with the people and the Indians to create difficulties which would advance their "own private views."

This response to the governor's message was prepared by a committee chosen by the House for the purpose, consisting of David Clarkson, Cornelius Van Horne, Paul Richard, Henry Cruger, Frederick Philipse, John Thomas, Lewis Morris, David Pierson, and William Smith, with nearly all of whom the reader has hitherto made the acquaintance.

April 24.

Clinton replied tartly, and adjourned the House for a week. When it reassembled, he called attention again to the distractions at the North. Money must be raised to pay the troops in full. The House referred to a letter from the Duke of Newcastle, of the preceding year, which authorized preparations for the Canadian expedition with an assurance that officers, as well as rank and file, were to be taken into his Majesty's pay. The governor had the means of paying the forces in his own hands, and if he refused, and harm came to the lives and estates of the people of New York, he alone would be to blame.

The refractory little Parliament met only to adjourn until nearly the middle of August. Meanwhile, the commissioners, entrenched behind a law of the governor's own making, would not obey his orders, and the soldiers were mutinous. Clinton replenished his exchequer with bills of

Hosted by Google

exchange, and went to Albany to try to straighten matters. The forces were deplorably diminished by sickness and desertion. Thirty-eight who had run away in a body had been fired upon by the officers at Esopus and arrested. The country north of Albany was infested with the enemy. Murders were of daily occurrence, and the victims to this terrible border-warfare were not left to the enjoyment of a moment's security or repose. They were compelled to fortify their houses by night, and go armed to their work in the fields by day. Saratoga was constantly harassed, and Albany threatened.

Sir William Johnson was indefatigable in his efforts to keep the Six Nations in good temper. They were disgusted with the inactivity of the English, and fretted over what they termed lack of courage in not destroying Crown Point, thus opening a passage to Canada. "Let us go up there," they said, "and we will not leave a soul alive." Johnson wrote to Clinton, under date of August 4, 1747, that he could hardly get time to lay pen to paper, as his house and every one of his outhouses were continually full of Indians from all nations; he was obliged to sit in council with them five and six hours each day, listening to their complaints, and answering their questions. The Iroquois had brought in many of the far tribes to form treaties, and they were ready to fight; but if the English did not begin soon, they threatened to make peace with the French for themselves. Johnson said he might do great service with those men if he only had the opportunity. But he was leading a miserable life among them, occasioned by so many disappointments, and they were thinking worse and worse of the English government.

Shirley, notwithstanding the neglect of the Ministry and the enormous difficulties in the way, was energetically at work trying to push forward an attack upon Crown Point, as the only method of checking the devastations of the enemy. He wrote to Clinton, urging unity of action in the colonies; and Clinton upon his return to New York placed the letter with a message before the Assembly. But the lack of confidence in the execution of the scheme, together with bickerings about the exact quotas from the different colonies, and the portion of the expense to be borne by the crown, delayed definite action. October came finally, and it was too late in the season to invade Canada, even if the other colonies had been ready.

Sir William Johnson about the same time appeared in New York to discuss Indian affairs. He said the warriors had been detained from hunting for a whole year, by direction of the governor, and were consequently in a state of destitution, — actually suffering for necessaries for themselves and their families. Measures must be taken for their relief, else he must

Hosted by Google

leave his Mohawk settlement, and his removal would be the signal for a general flight of the people of the valley. Forts should be erected in their country to inspire them with confidence; this latter was of the first importance. A number of sachems accompanied Johnson to the metropolis, and awaited developments.

The subject was discussed at great length, also plans for an expedition against Crown Point in the early spring, the forces to rendezvous at Albany by the 15th of April. Shirley thought an application should be made to the crown to send a large fleet into the St. Lawrence to attack Quebec at the same time. In the event of a refusal on the part of the parent government, the colonies should create a diversion themselves by fitting out such a fleet as they could with their own merchant vessels, to act in concert with ships of war which might be cruising near the American coast. Massachusetts, New York, and Connecticut should enter into a compact to march to the assistance of either, in case of an invasion; and the rest of the colonies should be invited to aid.

Clinton comprehended the scheme in an elaborate message to the Assembly, asking for a speedy reply. It came. It consisted of a long string of resolutions. The House voted cheerfully for whatever was essential to the Canadian invasion, for the defense of the hundreds of miles of frontier during the intervening winter, for generous and satisfactory presents to the Indian chiefs, who were present in the city, and for their suffering comrades at home; but significant allusion was made to the governor's drafts upon the crown during the past summer, which were supposed to have been for the Indian service, and had never been heard from, and therefore the sums which were now raised would *be placed in the hands of proper persons for disbursement.* Forts would be built in the Indian country only on condition that the other colonies shared the expenses.

The impeachment of executive integrity was too much for Clinton. In great wrath he informed the gentlemen he should receive nothing from them foreign to his message, and which did not relate to the preservation of the frontiers and the fidelity of the Indians. The effect of his laconic retort was similar to that of throwing a lighted torch into a magazine of gunpowder. The Assembly closed its doors, locked them, and laid the key upon the table in the ancient form, when grave matters were to be considered. A series of resolutions were adopted, declaring it to be the right and privilege of the House to proceed upon all proper subjects, in such order, method, and manner as should by the members be esteemed most convenient; that the declaration of the governor that he should receive nothing from the House at that time but what had been recom-

Hosted by Google

mended in his message was irregular and unprecedented, tending to the subversion of the rights, liberties, and privileges of the House and the people; and that whoever had advised that message had attempted to undermine those rights and privileges, and to subvert the constitution of the colony, and was, moreover, "an enemy to its inhabitants."

The resolutions were followed immediately by a lengthy address or remonstrance, reported by David Clarkson, who was chairman of the committee appointed to review the subject. It was read to the House and approved. The speaker, David Jones, signed it, and a committee, consisting of Clarkson, Philipse, Thomas, Cruger, Beekman, and Chambers, were chosen to present it to the governor. They went to his house, and, knocking at the outer door, told the servant who attended that they had a message. He disappeared and presently returned accompanied by a gentleman, who showed them into the presence of the governor. His Excellency received them politely, but, when they told him that they had come as a committee of the House with a remonstrance, which the chairman would read to him, he refused to hear it read, or to have it left upon his table, upon the ground that such a procedure without the presence of the speaker was unparliamentary.

Another message came swiftly to the House from the governor. He taunted the gentlemen for what he styled the farce of locking the door and laying the key with solemn force upon the table, and inquired ironically if there were suspicious people outside the doors attempting to break in, or if their own members were inclined to run away? The act must have been to give the appearance of shutting him out, which was a high insult to royal authority. They were putting on airs; and their assumption was virtually a denial of subjection to the crown and Parliament. He warned them of a power that was able to punish them, or any other legislative body, when it became criminal in the eye of the law. He vindicated his own conduct from the beginning of the controversy, denied any misapplication of money, and reviewed at length the misbehavior of the Indian Commissioners, which had resulted in what the House was pleased to term mismanagement in the placing of Sir William Johnson at the head of that department. He took the House to task for its want of common decency in ordering resolutions and remonstrances intruded upon him in the privacy of his own dwelling, and complained of the efforts made to deprive him of the esteem of the people. He pronounced all the charges and insinuations which had been heaped upon him during the last two years false and malicious; in his opinion such long-continued and unbecoming conduct could only arise from a firm principle of disloyalty, with a determination to deliver the country over to the king's enemies, or to overturn the con-

Hosted by Google

stitution by throwing the administration into confusion, and thus gratify the pride and private rancor of a few men at the risk of the lives and estates of the people; for, said he, "that there are such in this country; is no secret, nor the share they have in your private consultations."[1]

There were few so blind as not to understand that Clinton's barbed arrow was aimed at Chief Justice De Lancey, whose clear vigorous advice kept the Assembly strong in its independent course. Clinton had written repeatedly to the Lords of Trade urging the appointment of Colden as lieutenant-governor of New York. What was his surprise and chagrin when, upon opening a letter from the Duke of Newcastle, dated October 27, 1747, he found inclosed a commission for De Lancey. He attributed it to the influence of Admiral Sir Peter Warren, De Lancey's brother-in-law, who was now a member of Parliament from Westminster, and a favorite in the higher English circles.[2] Colden, who had been twenty-six years in the Council, and was much the older man, esteemed it a personal affront. He was not conscious of any wrong-doing. He had acted according to his stern convictions of right. He had governed the governor, it is true, in many things, but only for the public good. His crime must have been in laboring to support the authority of the crown. Formerly he and De Lancey had been fast friends. Peter De Lancey, the brother of the chief justice, had married Colden's daughter.[3] Alas! the families were estranged.

Clinton, who was contemplating a voyage to England, was directed to deliver the commission to De Lancey whenever he should depart from the government. He immediately wrote to the Lords, begging, as a great favor, that he might be authorized to suppress the commission to De Lancey, who, he said, was in league with the Assembly to encroach upon the prerogatives of the crown, and leave Dr. Colden president of the Council, which the latter deserved for his long and valuable service to the country. He also asked that the suspended counselors, Horsemanden and Bayard, might continue suspended; and that Admiral Sir Peter

[1] *Report of the Privy Council upon the State of New York, N. Y. Coll. MSS.*, VI. 614–639. *Abstract of the evidence relating to New York in the Books of the Lords of Trade, N. Y. Col. MSS.*, V. 639–704.

[2] Admiral Sir Peter Warren had been very successful in his naval exploits, and had taken so many rich prizes that he was said to be the richest man in England at this time. In the autumn of 1747 he was presented with a large silver monteth of curious workmanship, by the inhabitants of Barbadoes, in acknowledgment of his distinguished services. Lady Warren was greatly admired at the English Court. Some of the scribblers of the day pronounced her the most brilliant woman in Great Britain.

[3] Peter De Lancey lived in Westchester, and represented that borough in the Assembly from 1752 to 1768.

Hosted by Google

Warren might be shown less favor since he had exerted himself to the disadvantage of New York.

Clinton had more influence with the British Ministry than would naturally be supposed, but not sufficient to clog the growing popularity of the chief justice. The tact and scholarship of the latter, as appeared in his correspondence, triumphed in every instance over the diffuse productions of the governor. And, besides, it could by no means be proven that De Lancey ruled the Assembly. The Assemblymen were men of opinions, with personal dislikes and old feuds rankling in their blood. Their contumacy was more likely the ill effects of the condescensions of former governors. Thus the lords reasoned.

There was a brief lull in the conflict, but only for a few days. Orders came from the Duke of Newcastle for the disbanding of the troops engaged for the intended expedition, and directed the colonies to pay them and transmit the accounts to be reimbursed by Parliament. The House, after considering the subject, declined advancing either money or credit for the payment of the forces in arrears, in view of the almost ruined condition of the colony, through the heavy expenses entailed by the war. Bills were passed, however, providing for the support of garrisons and scouts during the winter, and for erecting such fortifications as seemed absolutely necessary.

On the 26th, Clinton sent in a message to the effect that he must shortly order a large detachment of militia to the frontiers, and demanded for them pay and subsistence. The same day Speaker Jones communicated the fact to the House, that the governor, by a written order under his own hand, had forbidden James Parker, the government printer, from publishing in the Post Boy (the newspaper which had succeeded the New York Gazette) the celebrated remonstrance which his Excellency had refused to hear read. Parker had refused to notice a verbal order from the governor's secretary, but printed in full the written mandate, together with a paragraph descriptive of the unmannerly intrusion of the committee upon the governor's privacy. Clarkson was highly incensed. He rose in his seat and made a brief statement of the actual features of the interview. Parker was sent for to produce the original document from the governor. This being done, resolutions were passed declaring that the attempt to prevent the publication of the proceedings of the Assembly was a violation of the rights and liberties of the people, and an infringement of their privileges; that the remonstrance was a regular proceeding; that the governor's order was illegal, arbitrary, and unwarrantable, and a violation of the liberty of the press, and that the speaker's order for printing the remonstrance was regular and consistent with his duty.

Oct. 26.

Hosted by Google

Parker preferred to cast his fortunes into the popular groove; the governor's order was disregarded, and the order of the Assembly obeyed. The remonstrance appeared in the next issue of the paper. Clinton was furious; cutting messages and sharp threats were shot in both directions. The controversy was maintained with fiery intensity for many days, in the course of which the House coolly directed Parker to reprint the offensive document, and furnish each member with two copies, "that their constituents might know that it was their firm resolution to preserve the liberty of the press."

A series of disagreements followed. It was whispered that Clinton was interested in privateers; that he had granted extravagant tracts of land in remote parts of the province (reserving shares to himself under fictitious names), which greatly weakened the frontiers; that he had demanded subsistence for certain companies under officers of his own appointing, which really never existed; that he had embezzled the presents provided for the Indians; that Saratoga was lost through his injudicious withdrawal of troops; that he obstructed the course of justice by delaying proceedings; that he sold offices, civil and military, and the reversions of the same; in short, that he was putting forth every energy to make the government a post of profit to himself. Clinton became so exasperated, that finally, on the 25th of November, he summoned the House before him, and in a long and exhaustive speech accused the gentlemen of having, in their continued grasping for power, encouraged disobedience throughout the colony, by willfully giving currency to notorious falsehoods which must necessarily cast contempt upon the king's representative; and dissolved the body.

A committee from the House were at the moment preparing another remonstrance for his delectation,— a formidable paper, sufficient to fill one hundred pages of an ordinary octavo, and which evinced no mean talent for reasoning and analysis. As it was nipped in the bud, so far as its official character was concerned, it was shortly published in the form of a letter to the governor, which did not improve his temper.

Oliver De Lancey in a fit of indignation asked his brother, the chief justice, if the affairs of the province could not be conducted without an Assembly; and he was reported to have recommended the utility of hanging three or four people, and establishing an independent government. Clinton was determined to make an example of him, and at last obtained several depositions to the effect that he had used disrespectful words, and called the governor "an arrant villain, scoundrel, and rascal." When the depositions were read in council, the chief justice expressed his abhorrence of such words, and desired leave to withdraw. Clinton proceeded to prosecute the offender.

Hosted by Google

Clinton made a strenuous effort all at once to prevail upon the Lords of Trade to suppress the office of treasurer; he wished the public funds to go directly into the hands of the receiver-general. If the laws might be repealed whence the treasurer derived his authority, it would compel the Assembly to obey his requirements, in the manner of issuing money. De Peyster, the treasurer, was as difficult to manage as the chief justice himself. He dared to neglect orders, when the governor demanded sight of accounts for the purpose of confuting the malice of the Assembly, and proving that instead of his having converted large sums to private uses, Speaker Jones had actually drawn a considerable amount for secret services connected with the House. "It shows," said Clinton, "how absolutely the treasurer and the treasury are under the control of the Assembly; I can neither oblige De Peyster to obey, nor appoint another treasurer in his place."

Abraham De Peyster, to whom frequent reference has been made during the last twenty-seven years, was not an active politician. He was connected by marriage and on intimate social terms with the leading men of the colony, but he held himself aloof from special controversies. He had fewer enemies, probably, than any other man connected with the government. His integrity was not questioned. He was immensely rich, — a fact which went far towards satisfying the community that he was a proper custodian for the colony's purse. He was a tall, handsome man, of pleasing address and aristocratic habits. He lived in a stylish manner in the old De Peyster mansion on Queen Street, which was built by his father in 1695.[1] His coach was silver-trimmed, emblazoned with the family arms, and drawn by four beautiful grays; the livery of his servants was a blue coat, with yellow cape, cuffs, and lining, and yellow small-clothes; the button-holes worked with yellow, and the buttons plain velvet.[2]

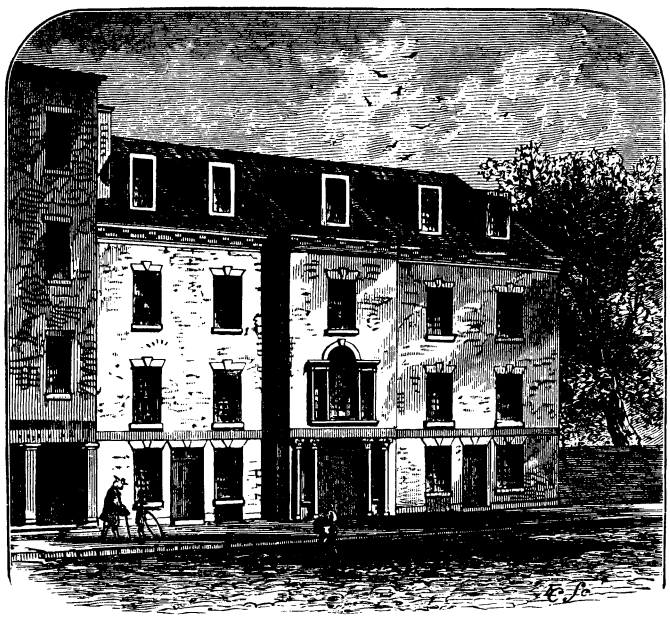
De Peyster's numerous children were already reaching years of maturity and settling about him. James, the elder son, was married early this spring to Sarah, daughter of Hon. Joseph Reade. He was a **1748.**

[1] After the death of the treasurer (in 1767), the De Peyster mansion, described on page 420, was purchased (in 1769) by Hon. Henry White, member of the governor's Council, and one of the founders and fourth president of the Chamber of Commerce. He married Eve, daughter of Frederick Van Cortlandt and Frances Jay. He was attached to the royal cause during the Revolution, and his estates were among the earliest confiscated in 1779. He left the city with the British army in 1783. His wife did not accompany him, and, his death following soon, she continued to reside in New York, taking up her abode at No 11 Broadway (her own inheritance from her father), where she lived for more than half a century, and where she died August 11, 1836, aged ninety-eight. *Chamber of Commerce Records, Sketches of Colonial New York, Biographical and Historical*, pages 36, 39. By John Austin Stevens.

[2] *Miscellaneous Works of* J. Watts de Peyster, p. 108.

Hosted by Google

merchant, and at one time (prior to their capture in the French war) had many vessels of his own at sea. He was also a gentleman of leisure and genius, and of dashing, impetuous military proclivities.



The De Peyster Mansion in Queen Street.

He built a castle-shaped, quaintly attractive country-house upon an eminence a little to the east of where Anthony Street now intersects Broadway; he furnished it expensively, importing a rare and valuable library, and a collection of pictures from the old masters. He laid out open groves, wooded walks, and extensive lawns and gardens. This beautiful and retired home, where the dignitaries of state and celebrities from abroad were often entertained, was called "Ranelagh."[1]

The new Assembly was composed of the same members, with only one or two exceptions, as its predecessor. Jones was again the chosen speaker. Indeed, things went on very much as they had done. The Indians

[1] Margaret De Peyster, the eldest daughter of James De Peyster, married Col. Thomas James, who commanded the royal artillery at New York in the time of the stamp act riot, and who was afterwards stationed at Gibraltar, concerning which fortress he wrote a noted work. James De Peyster, Jr., the fourth son of James De Peyster, was an officer in the British army under the Duke of York, and was killed in front of the lines of Menin, May 18, 1793. Frederic, the fifth son—see page 420. Elizabeth, the youngest daughter, born Jan. 17, 1768, became the wife of Dr William Hamersley. *De Peyster Genealogy.*

Hosted by Google

were less ardent in their attachment than before the failure of the Canadian enterprise, and must be courted. But a letter from the Duke of Newcastle unexpectedly proffered all the necessary money for Indian presents, and the House beamed with good-nature, and expressed itself quite willing to unite with the other colonies in any well-concerted scheme for the destruction of Crown Point.

Clinton began to flatter himself that things were going to move more smoothly, when he received another hit. The House appointed Robert Charles its agent to the Court of Great Britain, without saying "by your leave, sir." It was through the recommendation of Admiral Sir Peter Warren. The ostensible object in view was to oppose the royal confirmation of a late act in New Jersey respecting the partition line, although Clinton detected sinister designs in such a procedure. The House authorized Speaker Jones to instruct the agent and correspond with him respecting all matters of importance; and the honorable gentleman despatched a letter to Charles the same day.

Meanwhile a Congress convened in Aix-la-Chapelle, to restore tranquillity to the civilized world. After eight years of reciprocal annoyance, the conditions of peace between France and England were to return to the state before the war. Nothing was gained by either nation. The treaty, negotiated by the ablest statesmen of Europe with all the pomp of monarchical diplomacy, left the American boundary along its whole line determined only by the vague agreement that it should be as it had been. Henceforth both French and English hurried to occupy in advance as much territory as possible, without too openly compromising their respective governments. There was no cessation of hostilities until the conclusion of the treaty in October. May.

The tidings reached New York of what was in contemplation, just as Clinton and some of the gentlemen of his council were about starting for Albany, to meet Governor Shirley and the Mohawk sachems in grand council. Clinton sent messages to Shirley and to Sir William Johnson, and proceeded as far as the manor of Livingston, where he awaited replies. On the 20th of July the largest assemblage of persons which had ever yet convened in America crowded the city of Albany. Groups of picturesquely attired savages, with nodding plumes and variegated blankets, wandered up and down on every side. The proceedings of the conference were neither new nor important. The scouring process (the brightening of the covenant chain) was the chief topic of oratorical display. There were preparations, however, to be made for the coming peace, for the enemy had not yet suspended their murderous operations. The troops at Albany and at several points were suffering for the want of July 20.

Hosted by Google

supplies. Men were deserting and officers resigned their commissions, flatly refusing to serve longer. The governor ordered the Commissioners to forward provisions to the garrisons, and they declined because they had not been authorized by the Assembly.

Clinton advised with Shirley in regard to the course to be pursued with his republican Assembly. The two governors had been for some time in correspondence with the great masters of English jurisprudence, and both pinned their faith to the supremacy of Parliament.

The Ministry were disposed to experiment upon New York, and the return of peace was chosen as a favorable epoch. It was resolved to extort from the Assembly fixed salaries and a permanent revenue at the royal disposal, or by producing extreme disorder compel the interposition of Parliament. Clinton was the unwelcome instrument through whom the disciplining process was to be accomplished. He met the Assembly in October, and began his work by demanding what had been so often denied, a revenue for five years. This was indignantly refused. As for the more recent practice of naming the officers provided in the salary bills, the House not only justified it, but intimated that if the course had been earlier adopted, Justice Horsemanden of the Supreme Court, "a gentleman of learning and experience in the law," could not have been removed by the governor "without any color of misconduct" on his part. Clinton threatened. He declared higher power across the water would not overlook such unwarranted disobedience. The House calmly replied: "We are fully convinced by experience that the method of annual support is most wholesome and salutary, and we are confirmed in the opinion that the faithful representatives of the people will never depart from it."[1]

October.

Clinton wrote to Bedford that the people of New York had become the high court of appeal, and that he could not meet the Assembly without danger of exposing the king's authority and himself to contempt; he begged England to make a good example for all America by straightening the government of New York.

Halifax had recently entered (November 1, 1748) upon his long period of service as First Commissioner for the Plantations. He saw in them a half-hemisphere subject to his supervision. He resolved to elevate himself by enlarging the dignity and power of his employment. With the self-reliance of a presumptuous novice, he rushed towards an arbitrary solution of the accumulated difficulties in the administration of the colonies, by reviewing the scheme of augmenting the authority of the crown and making all orders of the king the

1749.

[1] *Journals of New York Assembly*, II. 246.

Hosted by Google

highest law in America. Such a bill actually passed Parliament, March 2, 1749.

Clinton and the Assembly met again in May, and the momentous struggle inaugurated the preceding autumn between the republican and the monarchial principle, was renewed with increased vigor. "Consider," said the governor, "the great liberties you are indulged with; and what may be the consequences should our mother country suspect you of designing to lessen the prerogative of the crown in the plantations."

The House did consider, and replied accordingly: "The faithful representatives of the people can never recede from the method of an annual support; governors are entire strangers to the people they are sent to govern; as they know the line of continuance in their government to be uncertain, all methods are used to raise estates to themselves. Should the public money be left to their disposition, what can be expected but the grossest misapplication under various pretenses, which will never be wanting."[1]

New York was at this time the central point of political interest in English North America. "Nowhere," says Bancroft, "had the relations of the province to Great Britain been so sharply controverted, or the Legislature, by its method of granting money, so nearly exhausted and appropriated all executive authority." No other colony was tinctured with such a fearlessness of monarchial power. The people were self-reliant. Few of the leading families were of pure English descent. The blood of other nations coursed through their veins. There was a happy blending of the free spirit of Holland and the polish of France with the pride of England. There was, moreover, a well-developed intelligence in respect to the workings of the various European governments. The idea was not wholly unfamiliar to the New York mind that existence was practicable without England. Why might not ten or a dozen English colonies join of their own free choice in a confederacy, as well as for Six Nations of unlettered savages to form and execute a scheme of union which had survived for generations?

Clinton was disgusted with the determined opposition which he encountered upon every side. He charged much of it to De Lancey, who had advised him in the beginning to accept the annual-support bill. He had withdrawn his confidence in a measure from Colden, because the latter had remonstrated with him in great heat concerning some of his proceedings. Robert Hunter Morris[2] was about to sail for England on

[1] It has been said that Clinton accumulated £80,000 while in the government of New York.

[2] Robert Hunter Morris was Chief Justice of New Jersey.

Hosted by Google

business connected with the New Jersey boundary line, and Clinton secretly charged him with his own defense, hoping to bring the resentment of the crown upon his adversaries. If victory was obtained over the Assembly, Morris was to be rewarded with the lieutenant-governorship of the province. The governor confidently expected, with the help of the Lords of Trade, to come off conqueror, and he prorogued the obdurate Assembly from one time to another, waiting and hoping for the crisis, until the clamors of the public creditors forced him to dissolve the House and order a new election. In the halls of state across the water months slipped by, yea, two years passed, and yet the case of New York was not fully digested. A commission was prepared appointing Robert Hunter Morris lieutenant-governor of New York, and it lay for some time in the Secretary of State's office. It was afterwards annulled, the De Lancey influence at court having turned the scale.



St. George's Chapel, 1752.

Rev. Henry Barclay had been rector of Trinity Church since October, 1746. Clinton signed his certificate of induction, although his Excellency was rarely ever seen in the sanctuary; he was not a religious man. In 1748 the subject of building St. George's Chapel was agitated, and six lots fronting on Nassau, near Fair Street, were selected as a site, and bought of David Clarkson for £500. Shortly after, some lots belonging to Colonel Beekman, fronting Beekman, near Cliff Street, were esteemed more suitable. They were accordingly purchased for £645. The corner-stone of the edifice was laid in 1749, a few weeks prior to the marriage of the minister (Mr. Barclay) to the daughter of Anthony Rutgers. The very next evening, Mr. Barclay's assistant, Rev. Mr. Auchmuty, was

Hosted by Google

married to Mrs. Tucker. Both ladies were spoken of in the highest terms of praise by the journals of the day. The chapel was not completed until 1752, and was consecrated in July of that year. Its aisles were flagged with gray stone, and its decorations were very unique. It was ninety-two by seventy-two feet upon the ground; the steeple was lofty, about one hundred and seventy-five feet high, but irregular. It was a striking object so far from the town and regarded with no little interest. A parsonage was subsequently built adjoining the chapel edifice, but for a time it stood almost alone upon the pretty elevation, with only an occasional house here and there in the neighborhood.[1]

The Moravians had become so numerous that they built a small chapel in Fulton Street, about the same time. A number of stores and private houses sprang into existence; the mayor, Edward Holland, was active in laying out new streets, and several of the old thoroughfares were paved. Professor Kalm, a Swedish traveler, gossips about the metropolis of that date, as follows: — 1751.

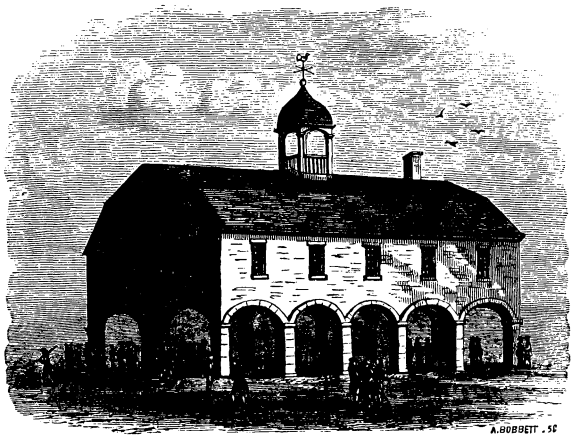
"In size New York comes nearest to Boston and Philadelphia; but, with regard to its fine buildings, its opulence, and extensive commerce, it disputes the preference with them. The streets do not run so straight as those of Philadelphia, and have sometimes considerable bendings; however, they are very spacious and well built, and most of them are paved, excepting in high places, where it has been found useless. In the chief streets there are trees planted, which in summer give them a fine appearance, and during excessive heat afford a cooling shade. I found it extremely pleasant to walk in the town, for it seemed like a garden. Most of the houses are built of bricks, and are generally strong and neat, and several stories high; some have, according to the old architecture, turned the gable end toward the street, but the new houses are altered in this respect. Many of the houses have a balcony on the roof, upon which the people sit at evening in the summer time; and from thence they have a pleasant view of a great part of the town, and likewise of part of the adjacent water, and the opposite shore. There is no good water to be met with in the town itself; but at a little distance there is a large spring of good water, which the inhabitants take for their tea, and for the uses of the kitchen. Those, however, who are less delicate on this point make use of the water from the wells in town, though it is very bad. This want of good water lies heavy upon the horses of the strangers that come to this place, for they do not like to drink the brackish water from the wells.

[1] Admiral Sir Peter Warren gave £100 to the building of St. George's Chapel, and a pew was assigned to him for his liberality. The Archbishop of Canterbury contributed also to the undertaking. The chapel was burned in 1814, excepting the walls, but was rebuilt the following year. Rev. Mr. Milnor preached in it for many years, as did also Rev. Dr. Samuel Johnson, first president of Columbia College. Rev. Dr. Tyng occupied the pulpit at a later date, even until he removed to his magnificent church in Stuyvesant Park.

Hosted by Google

"New York probably carries on a more extensive commerce than any town in the English North American provinces. Boston and Philadelphia, however, come very nearly up to it. The trade of New York extends to many places. They export to London all the various sorts of skins which they buy of the Indians, sugar, logwood, and other dyeing woods; rum, mahogany, and many other goods which are the produce of the West Indies. Every year they build several ships here which are sent to London and there sold; and of late years they have shipped a great quantity of iron to England. In return for these they import from London stuffs, and every other article of English growth and manufacture, together with all sorts of foreign goods. England, and especially London, profits immensely by the trade. There are two printers[1] in the town, and every week some gazettes, in English, are published, which contain news from all parts of the world."

That New York was conscious of her growing importance in a commercial point of view is evidenced by a significant enterprise in the beginning of the last half of the eighteenth century. It was the
1752. building of the Royal Exchange for merchants, at the foot of Broad Street, nearly on the line of Water Street. It was supported upon arches,



The Royal Exchange.

leaving the lower part entirely open. One room was specially arranged for the meeting of merchants, and the remainder of the building was appropriated to various uses; a coffee-room was opened at one end. The "Long Room" was the favorite place for societies to hold their annual

[1] William Bradford, the first printer and founder of the first newspaper in New York, died this year. The Weekly Journal of Zenger was discontinued. The Weekly Post-Boy and the Weekly Gazette and Mercury were the two newspapers of the city.

Hosted by Google

elections, and it was where dinners and other entertainments were given to persons of distinction. The edifice was completed in 1754.

Another writer, Rev. Mr. Burnaby, lifts the curtain to give us a passing glimpse of the people of that decade, as they appeared to his view: —

"The inhabitants of New York in their character very much resemble the Pennsylvanians. Being, however, of different nations, different languages, and different religions, it is almost impossible to give them any precise or determinate character. The women are handsome and agreeable, though rather more reserved than the Philadelphia ladies. The amusements are balls and sleighing expeditions in the winter, and, in the summer, going in parties upon the water and fishing, or making excursions into the country. There are several houses, pleasantly situated up the East River, near New York, where it is common to have turtle-feasts. These happen once or twice a week. Thirty or forty gentlemen and ladies meet and dine together, drink tea in the afternoon, fish, and amuse themselves till evening, and then return home in Italian chaises, a gentleman and lady in each chaise."

In the summer of 1752, quite a sensation was created by the announcement in the papers of the marriage of President Aaron Burr, of the New Jersey (Princeton) College, to the daughter of Rev. Jonathan Edwards, with hints that the wedding was a very odd affair. The romance was ere long in the possession of the social world. The excellent, accomplished, and brilliant divine had recently made a journey to the Stockbridge wilderness, and spent three days in the family of the distinguished preacher, Rev. Jonathan Edwards, with whom he had had a previous and intimate friendship. Henceforward the beautiful and vivacious Esther made no more lace and painted no more fans for the ladies of Boston. Burr returned to Newark, and presently sent a college boy to conduct his bride-elect and her mother to New York City. They arrived on Saturday, and on the following Monday the nuptial ceremonies were celebrated between the bachelor of thirty-seven and the charming maiden of twenty-one. And all the gossips wondered.

Burr was the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Newark for twenty years, as well as president of the college, which his toil and tact fostered into a healthy growth. His son, Aaron Burr, the future New York lawyer, and Vice-President of the nation, was born in the old parsonage on Broad Street in that city, February 6, 1756.

Clinton grew more and more impatient to return to England. He attributed his rheumatic sufferings and general debility to the severity of the New York winters. The cold was so intense during **1753.** nearly all the month of January, 1753, that heavily laden sleighs drawn

Hosted by Google

by two and even four horses, passed backward and forward on the ice between New York and Long Island. Spring found him ill and depressed. He was in no humor to worry over the problems which were constantly awaiting solution. He was weary of boundary jangles, and they just now seemed bursting out afresh. New Hampshire had been encroaching for some time past. Governor Wentworth issued grants in the unknown region about Lake Champlain, which contained scarcely an inhabitant at the time of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, with the expressed intention of extending his province until it met with another province. The result was a protracted quarrel between the two governments, and unpardonable disorders in that remote territory. Massachusetts all at once exhibited signs of greediness, and Robert Livingston, elder son of the late Philip Livingston, was disturbed in the possession of the eastern part of his manor. All through the months of April, May, and June, 1753, he was arresting persons for trespass, and resorting to actions for ejectment, and sending petition after petition to the New York government for protection in his rights and property. Serious riots occurred. Van Rensselaer on one occasion sent a messenger in great haste to notify Livingston that the Massachusetts people had threatened to take him dead or alive; and the servants about the manor-house were armed and placed on guard. The point, whether the boundary of the manor of Livingston was within the province of New York, was submitted to Colden, the surveyor-general, and he decided in the affirmative. Whereupon, David Jones, John Thomas, Paul Richard, William Walton, Henry Cruger, and John Watts, all members of the Assembly, were appointed to defend New York against both New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

The clouds had never lifted along the northern and northwestern frontier. Actual war had ceased, but scalping parties roved about at will. Sir William Johnson had been appointed to the Council in the place of Philip Livingston, deceased, and was in the confidence of both Houses. Much was expected of him in the matter of appeasing the wrath of the Mohawks, which was constantly being roused by acts of trespass and otherwise. And he accomplished much. But towards the close of the session of the Assembly on the 4th of July, Clinton was importuned to make a journey to the Indian country, to help settle the differences, and testily revealed the secret that he was in daily expectation of a successor, and should then sail for England.

It was October (7th) before the new governor arrived. Sir Danvers Osborne had been a member of Parliament from Bedfordshire; he was a brother-in-law of the Earl of Halifax. The day was Sunday, and as Clinton was at his country-seat in Flushing, Counselor Joseph Murray, whose

Hosted by Google

wife was a daughter of Governor Cosby, and a distant relative of the late Lady Osborne, received and entertained the baronet at his own residence.

On Monday Clinton came into town and waited upon Sir Danvers with much ceremony. An elegant dinner was given to the two governors by the Council, at which the mayor, corporation, and several prominent citizens were present. On Wednesday morning the chief actors in the drama assembled in the Council Chamber, and Clinton administered the oaths of office to Osborne, and delivered to him the seals; at the same time delivering (much against his will) to Chief Justice De Lancey the commission of lieutenant-governor. These preliminaries completed, a procession was formed, according to ancient usage, to conduct the new executive to the City Hall, that his commission might be read to the people. They had scarcely passed from the fort into Broadway, when the news of De Lancey's triumph was whispered abroad, and there was a tumultuous huzza of popular pleasure. The rabble crowded upon the procession and insulted Clinton so grossly that he was obliged, to his intense mortification, to retire from the party and take refuge in the fort. Osborne walked along beside the counselors grave and somewhat agitated, and apparently attentive to the noisy shouts of gladness with which De Lancey was greeted on every side. After his return to the Council Chamber he received the address of the city corporation. One passage in it seemed to disturb him. It was, "We are sufficiently assured that your Excellency will be as averse from countenancing, as we from brooking, any infringements of our estimable liberties, civil and religious."

He remarked to Clinton, "I expect like treatment to that which you have received before I leave this government."

A grand dinner was given to the two governors and the gentlemen of the Council by the corporation, the same afternoon. In the evening the city was illuminated, cannon fired, bonfires lighted, and fireworks displayed. The whole city seemed in a wild delirium of joy. Sir Danvers retired to his room gloomy and sad, and was apparently disinclined to converse with any one. The next morning he rose early, before the family were about, and alone strolled among the markets, and took a rapid walk through nearly all the streets in the city. At dinner, he complained of being unwell, and said with a smile to De Lancey, "I believe I shall soon leave you the government; I find myself unable to support the burden of it."

He convened the Council that day, and was somewhat embarrassed when he found that the gentleman who had the key of his cabinet had stepped out. He was anxious to show his instructions from the king. He said

Hosted by Google

he was strictly enjoined to insist upon the permanent revenue, and asked the gentlemen what they thought of the prospect of success. The unanimous opinion promptly expressed, was that the Assembly of New York never would submit to such a demand. With a distressed countenance he turned to William Smith, who had as yet remained silent, and asked, "What, sir, is your opinion?" "That no such scheme can ever be enforced," was the reply. The governor sighed, turned about, and leaned his head against the window casement, and exclaimed, "Then what am I sent here for?"

In the evening he was quite unwell, and a physician was summoned. He conversed with him in a dejected manner for a few minutes and then retired to his chamber. At midnight he dismissed his servant. As was subsequently discovered, he spent the remainder of the night in burning his private papers and regulating other affairs. A small sum of money borrowed since his arrival was carefully wrapped in a paper and directed to the lender. Just as the day began to dawn he went into the garden, to the right of the house, which was surrounded by a high fence; upon the top of this fence was a row of large nails, inverted, to exclude thieves, and over which he cast a silk handkerchief tied at the opposite ends, and proceeded to elevate his neck into it through the aid of a board upon which he stood.

About eight o'clock the city was stunned by the shocking intelligence that "*the governor had hanged himself.*" He had indeed been found quite dead. His body was removed to the house and the counselors quickly summoned. His private secretary, Thomas Pownal, testified that the baronet had been melancholy ever since the loss of his wife, of whom he was passionately fond, that he had once attempted his life with a razor, and that the Earl of Halifax, in obtaining his appointment to the governorship of New York, hoped that an honorable and active station would so occupy his mind as to alleviate his sorrows. The mayor, James Alexander, and Judge Chambers were appointed to take depositions concerning the facts and circumstances attending his death, and the jury found that he had destroyed himself in a moment of insanity. Rev. Mr. Barclay was desired by the counselors to read the burial service, and objected, as the letter of the rubric forbids the reading of it over any who lay violent hands upon themselves. But after much discussion it was decided, that, as Sir Danvers was insane, his remains were as much entitled to Christian burial as those of a man who had died in high fever.

Oct. 14. He was accordingly consigned with appropriate funeral ceremonies to Trinity Church, on Sunday, October 14, just one week from the date of his landing in the city.

Hosted by Google

The counselors left the chamber of death on Friday morning, and proceeded quietly and sadly to the fort, where Chief Justice De Lancey took the oath of lieutenant-governor; his commission, after being read in Council, was published only before the fort-gate, without parade or show, because of the tragic event which had just occurred. The commission of Sir Danvers, together with his seals and instructions, was obtained by order of the Council from Thomas Pownal.

The agitation of the great question concerning the permanent revenue was at its height when De Lancey found himself thus unexpectedly called to the chief command of the province. Of the instructions given by the crown to Osborne, and which his office compelled him to obey, the thirty-ninth enjoined in the strongest terms upon the executive to insist upon "a permanent revenue, solid, indefinite, and without limitation." The difficulty of the position was only equalled by its delicacy. De Lancey's tact and statesmanship were now given full play. He had repeatedly advised the Assembly never to submit. He did not wish to appear inconsistent. But as an officer of the crown he must urge obedience with seeming sincerity, at least.

In his opening speech he communicated the obnoxious instructions, after having paid a graceful and eloquent tribute to Sir Danvers Osborne, — lamenting his death as a public loss because of his birth, connections, liberal education, and distinguished character. But the language was so well chosen that while De Lancey convinced the Ministry that he was zealous in the promotion of the interests of the crown, he gave the Assembly to understand that he should by no means require compliance with the instructions. He was diffuse on the subject of obedience to royal authority, and eloquently recommended that the support-bills should be framed in such a manner that he could act in relation to them consistent with his official duty. The members were unruffled, for they had faith to believe that the genius of the man who had been the chief adviser of the present mode of raising and issuing public money, and who for twenty years had proved himself a lover of his birthplace, and a just judge, would guide them even through the perils of continued opposition. Oct. 30.

The response evinced equal care in the method of expression. The House was extremely surprised to find that the public transactions of the colony had been so maliciously represented to the king. There was not a more loyal people in all the British dominions. Wherever peace and tranquillity had been disturbed it had been through the maladministration of the late unworthy governor. De Lancey was complimented upon his known abilities and correct principles, it was promised that nothing

Hosted by Google

should be wanting to render his executive career easy and happy, and it was hoped that he would assent to the style of money-bills which had been in practice for the past sixteen years.

Every recommendation of the lieutenant-governor in respect to the care of the frontiers was promptly adopted. It was resolved to assist the neighboring colonies, some of whom had written for aid against the persistent incursions of the French. One of the newspaper editors was prosecuted for republishing that portion of the Assembly's journals containing the thirty-ninth instruction, only the substance of which he was ordered to reveal. £800 were voted for Indian presents, and £150 for De Lancey's voyage to Albany. £1,550 were voted for his salary, the present year, a larger sum than ever before given to a lieutenant-governor. This bill was immediately rejected, and the Assembly admonished to obey the orders of the crown. Consequently no bill providing for the application of public money was passed during the session, the House firmly refusing to arrange for a permanent revenue. De Lancey sent all resolutions, representations, and addresses against the measure to the English Ministry, and when he could do so with propriety, he wrote to the chief powers about the throne, counseling concession to the views and wishes of New York. He continued to decline assenting to the annual bills, which were passed at every future session of the Assembly until 1756, in consequence of which he received no salary during the whole three years. In the spring of that year the Ministry yielded the contested point, and agreed to annual support-bills for the future, directing Sir Charles Hardy, then governor-in-chief, to communicate the change to the Assembly, which he did on the 24th of September. For this triumph New York was indebted solely to the master policy of her gifted son, Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey.

An event of great moment occurred in the spring of 1754. The celebrated Congress, consisting of delegates from all the colonies, convened, by order of the Lords of Trade, at Albany. The object was to concert measures for the common safety, the French having committed acts of aggression all along the frontiers, and attempted to erect forts on the Ohio.[1] The session commenced on the 19th of June, and terminated September 21. Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey presided. Joseph Murray, John Chambers, William Smith, and Sir William Johnson were the committee of delegates from the Council. Colonel Myndert Schuyler was the chairman of the Indian commissions at Albany. Samuel Wells and John Worthington were among the delegates from Massa-

1754.

June 19.

[1] For letters from Lords of Trade, and minutes of proceedings in full, see *Doc. Hist. N. Y.*, II. 545–617.

Hosted by Google

chusetts, Lieutenant-Governor William Pitkin and Roger Wolcott, Jr. were of those sent by Connecticut, and conspicuous among the representatives of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, were, respectively, Theodore Atkinson, Stephen Hopkins, Abraham Barnes, and Benjamin Franklin. They were seated in the order of rank, and a finer-looking body of men it would have been difficult to have grouped together in any period of our history. Before them came one hundred and fifty Indian sachems in their richest robes and gayest feathers, glittering with ornaments. Long speeches and liberal presents strengthened once more the barrier of defense upon which New York must rely in the event of another war with France. But the general treaty which the Lords had specially recommended, to comprise all the provinces in one grand union of interests in the king's name, for the purpose of drawing the Indians into closer confidence, was not concluded. A vast amount of important business was transacted; the chronic complaints of the Indians about having been defrauded of their lands, underwent searching examinations, and legal methods were taken to redress their actual or supposed grievances. In many instances the property where they wished to dispose of it was purchased over again by the grantee. De Lancey, who was in favor of the consolidation of the colonies for mutual protection, proposed the building and maintaining at the joint expense a chain of forts covering the whole exposed frontier, and some in the Indian country itself. But the Congress seemed so fully persuaded of the backwardness of the several Assemblies to come into united and vigorous action, that nothing was accomplished. A federal union of the colonies, to be enforced by Act of Parliament, was suggested and discussed. A committee, consisting of one delegate from each province, was appointed to draft a plan. It was shaped by Benjamin Franklin, and subsequently sent to the different provinces for consideration. It was in many of its features similar to the Federal Constitution, which Benjamin Franklin assisted in framing at a later period. The seat of government was to be in Philadelphia, which it was said might possibly be reached from either South Carolina or New Hampshire in fifteen or twenty days.[1]

But the scheme was not adapted to the times. The people opposed it, because it gave too much power to the king. The king rejected it because it gave too much liberty to the people. It met with coldness and disfavor on all sides, and finally expired. Yet it prepared the public mind to receive and digest ideas of greater magnitude and importance.

For a half-dozen years or more attention had been more than ever

[1] *Doc. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. II. 612-616.

Hosted by Google

directed to the subject of education, and divers sums had been raised by public lotteries for the founding of a college in New York City. A score of men of vigorous intellects, who had been educated at Yale and elsewhere, were infusing new life into every department of letters with which they came in contact. The universities of New England were awaking to renewed activity. The college of New Jersey was giving an impetus to scholarship, and graduating young men who were shortly to try their skill in mapping out a republic.[1] Libraries and philosophical societies were being formed in various directions. Dr. Colden had just finished a book, the "History of the Five Nations," which was rendering his name famous. Learned scientists from Europe were attracted to our shores, and extended cordial sympathy to every progressive movement. Literary seeds long since dropped here and there in a rich soil, were showing signs of life, and were erelong to bring forth much fruit.

In 1751 it was found that the amount of money accumulated for the college was £3,443, and the Assembly passed a bill to appoint ten trustees to take charge of the same; they were to be the elder counselor, the speaker of the House, the judges of the Supreme Court, the mayor of the city, the treasurer of the province, James Livingston, Benjamin Nicoll, and William Livingston. Seven of the appointees were Episcopalians, two were of the Dutch Reformed Church, and the tenth, William Livingston, was a Presbyterian. Shortly afterward, in 1752, the vestry of Trinity

[1] Richard Stockton signed the Declaration of Independence. He was one of the notable seven who composed the first class that graduated from the New Jersey (Princeton) College on the memorable day when Rev. Aaron Burr was elected its president, November 9, 1748. He studied law with Judge David Ogden of Newark, N. J., and became one of the most brilliant lawyers at the American bar; he was one of the few who were so conscientious that he would never engage in a cause except upon the side of justice and honor. He visited England in 1766, where he performed valuable service for New Jersey. Upon his return he was escorted with great ceremony to his residence by the people, by whom he was much beloved. He was a member of the Council, and judge of the Supreme Court. When the British army overran Princeton they ransacked his quiet home, destroyed his library, and cut the throat of his elegant portrait, which was hanging upon the wall. It is still preserved, with the centennial gash, and hangs where it hung a century ago in the ancient old edifice. His son Richard, born in 1764, was a distinguished lawyer and statesman. He was in Congress for many years, and was several times talked of for the presidency. The son of the latter, Commodore Richard Field Stockton, born in 1796, was a remarkable man. His life was a succession of daring and successful exploits. He was one of the first to advocate a steam navy in this country, and originated a war-steamer which was built under his immediate supervision in 1844, which proved to be superior to any war-vessel at that time afloat, and furnished substantially the model for numerous others, not only in this but in foreign countries. The next year he was sent to the Pacific, and with a small force, amid many romantic and thrilling adventures, he conquered California, and established the government of the United States within her boundaries. He was afterwards a member of the Senate of the United States, where, among other noble deeds, he procured the passage of a law for the abolition of flogging in the navy.

Hosted by Google

Church offered to donate from the estate belonging to their opulent corporation, the site for a college building and necessary grounds.[1] In 1753 the trustees of the college invited Rev. Dr. Samuel Johnson, of Stratford, Connecticut, (an Episcopal divine,) to become the president of the proposed college, with a salary of £250 per annum; the vestry of Trinity Church having pledged themselves to make a reasonable addition to the sum. He accepted, and opened the college in the autumn with a class of ten, in the large vestry-room of the church edifice. It was expected that Rev. Mr. Whittlesey, a Presbyterian minister from New Haven, would serve under President Johnson as second master of the institution. But Dr. Johnson's son acted as tutor, and at his death soon after, an Eton and Cambridge student was installed in the position, and Mr. Tredwell, a Harvard graduate, was made professor of mathematics and natural philosophy; a fine apparatus having been imported. The churches of the various denominations took alarm, suspecting that the Episcopalians designed engrossing the government of the college.

William Livingston discovered such to be the fact, when the draft of a plan was laid before the trustees, so shaped as to exclude from the presidential chair of the college any gentleman not in communion with the Church of England, and introducing the book of common prayer for all religious exercises. The purpose was at the same time announced of applying to the lieutenant-governor for a charter under the Great Seal. Livingston was one of the younger men among the trustees, and almost alone in a quick, fierce, and determined opposition to the founding of a college on sectarian principles. He warned his associates of the folly of such a course, and protested against any further proceedings in the matter without the unanimous consent of the Legislature, to whom they were responsible.

William Livingston was a lawyer of marked ability, and had plunged into political and religious controversies from his first appearance upon the stage of human affairs. He was independent and fearless, and, in almost every instance, arrayed upon the side which had least to boast of power or present popularity. Wit and satire breathed naturally from his lips and hung upon the point of his pen. He was an indefatigable worker, and, although his intellectual growth was marked by a curious disproportion and ungainliness, — that is, one faculty shot forth, then another,

[1] It seems from the records of Trinity Church, that, as early as 1703, the rector and wardens were directed to wait upon the governor (Lord Cornbury) to learn what part of the king's farm had been intended for the college which it was the royal design to build. It seems also to have been the intention of Berkeley to transfer the institution of learning intended for Bermuda to New York, in 1729. It was not, however, until 1746, that the first actual step was taken, the Assembly passing a bill to raise £2,250 by lottery, "for the encouragement of learning, and toward the founding of a college."

Hosted by Google

and another, so that life was on the wane before the full stature and the final proportions were reached, — he achieved deserved eminence, not only at the bar, but in political foresight, which rendered his career in the end substantially triumphant. He was one of those from whom it was always possible to expect greater things than he had yet accomplished. His success in law was not due to eloquence or even fluent speech, but to the accuracy of his knowledge, and the soundness of his logic, seasoned always with dry humor and stinging sarcasm. He was severely strait-laced on many subjects, but could unbend when it was his humor, and in the social circle or at the club was a charming companion.[1] He was at this time a tall, slight, thin, graceful man of thirty, or thereabouts; so thin and slight, indeed, that the ladies called his face the knife-blade. He wore the inevitable powdered wig, the velvet coat, embroidered ruffles, short breeches, silk stockings, and gold buckles of the period.

He wielded the quill in the matter of exposing the evils attending the scheme of the trustees, with such force that under his lash the leaders of the church party winced, and charged him with the design of breaking up the project of a college altogether. The Independent Reflector, a paper which he established, and which had flourished about a year, contained an article on the subject every week. The following are a few of the titles: "Primitive Christianity, short and intelligible, — Modern Christianity, voluminous and incomprehensible"; "Of the Veneration and Contempt of the Clergy"; "The Absurdity of the Civil Magistrates Interfering in Matters of Religion"; "Of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance."

"Will," said Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey, meeting him in the street one day, "you would be the cleverest fellow in the world if you were only one of us."

"I will try to be a clever fellow, and not be one of you," was the laconic reply.

The rigid, exacting, Scotch Presbyterians were thoroughly roused, and, led by Livingston, contended, through the press and in the Assembly, that a seminary of learning should have no connection with any religious society whatever. The struggle delayed action, and diverted one half of the funds to the city corporation.[2] But the charter, as projected, finally prevailed. De Lancey signed it on the 31st of October, 1754; he did not esteem it wise, however, in the face of such hostile and perpetual clamor, to deliver it until the following May. The governors of the college, as

[1] William Livingston was at a subsequent date president of the "Moot," a club composed entirely of lawyers.

[2] To build a jail and a pest-house.

Hosted by Google



"'Will,' said Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey, meeting him in the street one day, 'you would be the cleverest fellow in the world if you were only one of us.' 'I will try to be a clever fellow, and not be one of you,' was the laconic reply." *Page 614.*

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

named in the charter, consisted of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the principal civil officers of the colony, the chief clergymen from the five religious denominations, and twenty private gentlemen, among whom was William Livingston. This mark of respect fell short of its intent, as it had not the slightest effect in the way of silencing him in the expression of his cordial disapproval. Money was collected in England, and books forwarded. Sir Charles Hardy gave £500. The largest donor in New York was Hon. Joseph Murray, who gave property worth £8,000, including his own private library.

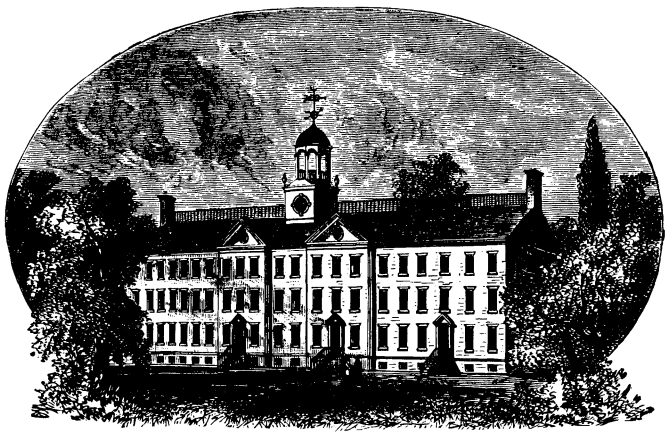
A feud, growing chiefly out of this college controversy, between the De Lancey and Livingston parties reached the very acme of bitterness. For many years subsequently, these two powerful and wealthy families were sworn foes in every matter of public or private interest, and exerted a controlling influence over the politics of New York, so much so, indeed, that in 1759 the rival parties were designated by the names of the two leaders, De Lancey and Livingston.

An amusing and authentic anecdote is related of a mulatto slave belonging to De Lancey, who stole a pair of shoes, and ran away. She was overtaken, arrested, and brought into court for examination. She refused to give her owner's name, and when commanded with threats to do so, still refused, sullenly determined to go to jail, the whipping-post, or die even, — for stealing was then punishable with death, — but never to disgrace her master's family. The pressure, however, became so strong that she was constrained to give a satisfactory answer to the officers of the law, so she declared that she belonged to the Livingstons, that the stigma of owning a dishonest slave might be attached to her master's enemies.

The corner-stone of the college building was laid by Governor Hardy, August 23, 1756. The site chosen was on the block now bounded by Murray, Church, and Barclay Streets, and College Place, intersected by Park Place. An English traveller wrote: "The new college is to be built on three sides of a quadrangle facing the Hudson River, and will be the most beautifully situated, I believe, of any college in the world." Its surroundings were pretty fields and pleasant shade; there was scarcely a habitation in sight at the time. The first Commencement occurred in June, 1758, when ten bachelors and as many masters of art were graduated. The students began to lodge and mess in the college building in May, 1760; and in June of the same year the procession moved from there to St. George's Chapel on Beekman Street, to hold the third Commencement. In 1762, at Dr. Johnson's request, the Rev. Myles Cooper, fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, was sent to New York by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and appointed fellow of King's College, professor

Hosted by Google

of moral philosophy, and to assist the president in instruction and discipline, with the understanding that he was to succeed him, which he did the following year. Dr. Cooper was one of the most elegant scholars of his time, and the young men placed under his training were taught, by proper masters and professors, natural law, physic, logic, ethics, metaphysics, mathematics, natural philosophy, astronomy, geography, history, chronology, rhetoric, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, modern languages, the belles-lettres, and whatever else of literature tended to accomplish them as



King's College.

scholars and gentlemen. A grammar school was annexed to the college for the preparation of those who wished to take a full course. A high fence surrounded the edifice, enclosing also a large court and garden. A porter attended the front gate, which was always closed at nine o'clock in the winter and ten o'clock in the summer; after which hour, the names of all those who came in were duly reported to the president. Among the earlier graduates were the three celebrated New-Yorkers, John Jay, Robert R. Livingston, and Gouverneur Morris.

It was during the summer of 1754 that Robert Hunter Morris returned to New York, commissioned as governor of Pennsylvania, to supersede Hamilton, who had resigned. Benjamin Franklin was on a journey to Boston, and stopped a few days also in New York. He had been previously acquainted with Morris, and they had several pleasant interviews. Morris asked Franklin if he must expect as uncomfortable an administration as his predecessor. "No," replied Franklin, "you may, on the contrary, have a very comfortable one, if you will only take care not to enter into any dispute with the Assembly."

Hosted by Google

"My dear friend," said Morris, laughing, "how can you advise my avoiding disputes? You know I love disputing, it is one of my greatest pleasures; however, to show the regard I have for your counsel, I promise you I will if possible avoid them."

Franklin remembered and made happy allusion to the fact that Morris had been brought up to disputations from a boy; his father, the New Jersey governor, having accustomed his children to dispute with one another for his diversion while sitting at table after dinner. The habit of forming opinions and maintaining them resolutely was a Morris characteristic.

In the autumn the New York Society Library was organized. The college question stimulated this movement. A library was wanted "for the use and ornament of the city, and the advantage of the intended college." Money was collected and books purchased, which were placed in the same room in the City Hall with the ponderous tomes of theology, bearing the autograph of Rev. John Sharpe, which had received little attention for several years. The trustees appointed were Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey, James Alexander, John Chambers, John Watts, William Walton, Rev. Henry Barclay, Benjamin Nicoll, William Smith, William Livingston, and William Alexander.

In the mean time blood had been shed, George Washington defeated, and the scalping-knife unsheathed from the Ohio to the Kennebec, yet England and France were at peace. The English Ministry paid little heed to the bold assumptions of the French in America, leaving the whole matter in charge of the Duke of Cumberland, the captain-general of the armies of Great Britain. He, taking it for granted that his polite neighbors meant something, akin to war, sent two regiments of soldiers to America under the command of General Edward Braddock. The **755.** French, notwithstanding the diplomatic subtleties with which the **Jan.** English minister was amusing the French court, were cognizant of these movements, and sent a fleet of transports with troops, under the command of Baron Dieskau, to Canada. About the same time De Vaudreuil sailed from Brest, to supersede Duquesne in the government of Canada. Scarcely had the French sails caught the ocean breezes, when the English sent Admiral Boscawen in pursuit. Both fleets arrived nearly at the same moment off Cape Race, but were prevented by the deep fog from seeing each other. The French fleet, favored by this circumstance, passed up the St. Lawrence, and safely landed officers and troops at Quebec; excepting two vessels. The *Alcide* and the *Lys* encountered a portion of the English fleet, and, after a sharp action, surrendered.

The certain prospect of another aggravating contest filled New York with alarm. Notwithstanding the colony had from its earliest history been

Hosted by Google

constantly talking about fortifications and defenses, until the subject had grown monotonous, and, in spite of appropriations and protracted labor and Indian treaties, the city and province were in a comparatively defenseless condition. Albany was so exposed that the Indians laughed derisively. Should Albany be taken, there was nothing to prevent the French from sweeping down the Hudson, occupying New York City, and proceeding with their conquests into New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and beyond.

February.

The danger was too imminent for any waste of words. De Lancey convened the Assembly, by advice of the Council, on the 4th of February, and, although the Livingston interest ruled in that body (Robert Livingston, third lord of the manor, William Livingston, James Livingston, and three gentlemen who had married Livingstons, were members of the House) and in any other event would have opposed whatever De Lancey proposed, the common peril overcame all other considerations. A large amount of money was needed to build strongholds above Albany, and strengthen defenses everywhere. The Assembly acted promptly. In defiance of royal instructions, it authorized an issue of £45,000 in bills of credit, to be sunk at stated intervals by a tax. It also prohibited any supplies of provisions from being sent to the French colonies; and it made the militia subject to such penalties as should be imposed by the executive.

Feb. 4.

Sir William Johnson hastened to New York to take his seat in the Council, bringing an appeal from the Mohawks, who were desperately frightened. Hostilities would let loose the hordes of French Indians upon their castles, which were now entirely defenseless, and they begged for aid. There was no alternative but to comply. The government decided to stockade their castles, and erect such other works as would best protect the aged warriors. The House authorized De Lancey to draw upon the contingent fund for this purpose; and directed Sir William Johnson to estimate the expenses, and construct, on his return, such defenses as in his judgment might be deemed advisable.

About the same time letters came from Governor Shirley urging the old project of an expedition to drive the French out of Canada. Thomas Pownal was the bearer of despatches; he called upon the lieutenant-governor, and was received somewhat coldly. He was no stranger in the city, and went immediately to consult with some of the leading gentlemen of the Livingston faction. The influence in favor of Shirley's plan was so strong that De Lancey thought it wiser to yield gracious approval, although he was far from satisfied with the course Shirley had taken on a former occasion, where, differences of opinion having occurred in regard to

Hosted by Google

certain details, the Massachusetts governor delivered himself of expressions of contempt for his high-toned New York contemporary, not easily ignored or forgotten. A committee from the Council met a committee from the House, and it was resolved that if Massachusetts would raise fourteen hundred men, New York would raise eight hundred, and would agree to contribute to a general fund for the support of the war. Before the resolution should be acted upon, it was proposed to submit the same to the approval of General Braddock.

The latter officer had already arrived in Virginia, and had summoned the colonial governors for the 14th of April, to meet him in conference. Shirley of Massachusetts, De Lancey of New York, Morris of Pennsylvania, Sharpe of Maryland, and Dinwiddie of Virginia, presented themselves at the appointed time. Four separate expeditions were planned. The first, for the complete reduction of Nova Scotia, was to be commanded by Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence of that province. The second, to recover possession of the Ohio valley, would be led by Braddock himself. The third, under command of Shirley, was to expel the French from Fort Niagara, and form a junction with Braddock's forces. The fourth, having for its object the capture of Crown Point was placed under the command of Sir William Johnson, whose army would be made up of the provincial militia and the warriors of the Six Nations. April 14.

As soon as plans were fully matured each officer hastened to his post. Shirley was detained in New York a few days, trying to remove the objections which De Lancey had raised to the form of Johnson's commission. The two governors were not at ease in each other's society, many points of dispute had arisen between them, and were likely to arise in the future; and when Shirley named Peter Van Brugh Livingston and William Alexander (Livingston's brother-in-law), in preference to Oliver De Lancey, as agents in the purchase of supplies for the Niagara expedition, the lieutenant-governor found it difficult to control his indignation.

The city was in a bustle of military preparation. Troops were constantly arriving, recruiting offices sprung into being, and soldiers were drilled at all hours of the day. Men were actively at work upon new defenses, as well as trying to strengthen those which had cost so much in the past; and provision was made for extra fire-arms, to supply all the the citizens in case of an invasion.

Sir William Johnson summoned the Indians to Johnson Hall, and on the 21st of June opened a grand council. More than eleven hundred of the children of the forest were present, an unprecedented and unexpected number, and although prepared to feed a great many, this remark-

Hosted by Google

able visitation nearly swept the larder clean. Johnson threw into his speeches all the fire and energy of which he was master, and nearly all the sachems were disposed to enlist under his standard.

Meanwhile the expedition for Acadia — Nova Scotia — was on its way. The two forts were quickly captured, and the English were thus in safe and undisputed possession. And then they proceeded to execute one of those needless and wanton acts which disgraced the age, and even humanity itself.

The Acadians were a simple, harmless, and pious people, leading a pastoral life among their flocks and herds, and tilling the soil, which, for more than a century and a half, had descended from father to son. They had remained in the territory, which, after repeated conquests and restorations, had, in the treaty of Utrecht, been conceded to Great Britain, and were hardly conscious of the change of sovereigns. For nearly forty years they had been forgotten or neglected, and had prospered in their seclusion. Through their industry the fertile fields and rich meadows were in the highest state of cultivation. No tax-gatherers intruded upon them, no magistrate dwelt within their borders. The parish priest was the sole arbiter of their disputes, and beyond him there was no appeal. Their morals were pure, they harbored no ill-will towards their fellow-men, and were happy and contented. The husbands and brothers went forth in the early morn to work in the fields, and the wives and sisters plied the shuttle or trained the woodbine and the honeysuckle over the doors of their pretty cottages.

Under the flimsy pretext of its rendering the possession of Nova Scotia insecure to allow so large a body of French to reside there, it was determined to set adrift the entire colony. It was no difficult matter to get access to records and titles, as the unsuspecting victims were totally ignorant of law. Such papers were taken and carefully removed. Their property was then demanded for the public service without bargain or payment. The order may still be read upon the Council records at Halifax, — "They must comply without terms, immediately, or the next courier will bring an order for military execution upon the delinquents."

The unoffending sufferers were despised because they were helpless. Presently their boats and fire-arms were taken from them; then a general proclamation was issued commanding the males of all ages to assemble at their respective villages on the 5th of September. How could they dream of any hostile intent! At Grand Pré, one of the places designated, four hundred and eighteen came together, and were huddled into a church, for what purpose they little dreamed. The doors were closed and barred. They were then informed that their lands, houses, and live-

Hosted by Google

stock were confiscated to the crown, and that they themselves were to be removed at once from the province; but "*through the goodness of his Majesty*" they were to be permitted to take with them their cash in hand, with such portion of household goods as would not encumber the vessels in which they were to sail.

They were prisoners indeed. They had left their homes but for the morning and were never to return. Their families were to share their lot. But as there were not enough transports to carry them all at one time, it was deemed advisable to get rid of the men first, and leave the women and children until other vessels could be provided. The 10th of September was the day of embarkation. The wretched fathers, husbands, and sons were drawn up six deep, the young men first, and the seniors behind, and under a strong guard marched to the shore. The women and the children rushed forward, and one wail of anguish rent the heavens. Not one among them had anticipated this terrible separation.

Weeks elapsed before the broken-hearted beings were all shipped. For months the newspapers of New York and elsewhere contained advertisements of husbands seeking wives, lovers seeking their affianced, and brothers seeking their sisters.

Seven thousand of these unfortunate Acadians were distributed through the colonies. A few of them after weary wanderings found their lost ones, but by far the greater number nevermore beheld the faces of those who were dearer than life itself. The pen of one of our gifted poets has rendered the memory of this inhumanity lasting, and it can only be contemplated with detestation while the sanctity of the family tie is cherished in the human heart.[1]

The news that Sir Charles Hardy had been selected to succeed Sir Danvers Osborne as governor of New York reached the city in March. He arrived on the 3d of September. Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey waited upon him and spent a quiet evening with him on the vessel before he landed. He was received in like manner as his predecessors, save that there was very little enthusiasm. Sept. 3.

He was, like Clinton, an unlettered admiral, and it was quickly discovered that he was out of his sphere in matters of state as well as deficient in executive talent; to govern he must have a leader. De Lancey was in

[1] *Haliburton's History of Nova Scotia. Bancroft. Graham. Stone. Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence to the Lords of Trade. Monckton to the Lords of Trade.* English writers attempted to justify this cruelty on the ground of "military necessity." But there seems to have been no "military necessity" in the act whatever, save in the imagination; and had there been, the dictates of decency and common humanity should have protected the family relation.

Hosted by Google

the gap, and continued as much the real commander-in-chief as he had been.

The war was the all-absorbing topic. The death and defeat of General Braddock on the 9th of July had shocked the whole community. An evil star hung over the expedition against Niagara also. It was to have started early in the spring; but the troops who were to take part in it, composed of Shirley's, Pepperell's, and Schuyler's regiments, did not arrive in Albany until July, and were about to embark when the news of Braddock's defeat came. The effect of this intelligence was disastrous. It filled the army with terror, and great numbers of the troops deserted. Delays were inevitable, and it was nearly the end of August when Shirley, now (since the death of Braddock) commander-in-chief of the American forces, arrived at Oswego. More boats had to be built, and by the time they were finished a storm set in so severe as to render it unsafe for the troops to venture upon the lake; and when, on September 26, an order was given for embarkation, a succession of head winds and tempests arose, which continued for thirteen days, after which sickness prevailed, the Indians, not relishing the water, deserted, and the season was too far advanced. On the 24th of October, Shirley returned to Albany.

The expedition against Crown Point, under Sir William Johnson, was more successful. It resulted in the defeat of Baron Dieskau, who had been sent to meet the approaching army, and expected, after its annihilation, to proceed to Albany and beyond. Both Johnson and Dieskau were wounded, and the latter was borne, while his troops were flying, into the tent of the former. He wrote to Count d'Argenson, under date of September 14, 1755, "I know not at present what will be my fate; from M. de Johnson, the general of the English army, I am receiving all the attention possible to be expected from a brave man, full of honor and feeling." It is said that before the Baron left America, he presented Johnson with a magnificent sword as a token of regard.

The victory at Lake George was a military achievement of which New York and New England had reason to be proud; and it headed a series of triumphs which saved America from coming under the dominion of the French. But the expedition did not reach Crown Point. Governor Hardy, attended by Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey, and several gentlemen of the Council, went to Albany as soon as the news of Dieskau's defeat reached New York, in order to further operations, and remained until November 26.

Shirley, in the mean time, arrived in Albany and found fault with everything which had been done by the subordinate officers. He hampered the movements of Sir William Johnson, and complained because

Hosted by Google

they had not been more effectual. Why had not the enemy been pursued? Why did not the General move boldly against Crown Point? What was the sense in constructing a useless fort? He did not take into account the difficulties in the way of attacking, with raw and undisciplined militia, carefully constructed breastworks defended by regulars, trained under the best generals of Europe. Shirley was a consequential man. He paraded his marvelous military knowledge before the public eye, but he did not put much of it to the test in his own personal operations. Always in a bustle, he never made progress; his plans were feasible, often brilliant upon paper, but practically they did not work well. His magnificent scheme for the capture of Niagara having failed, he must forward supplies to the garrisons, and then "revolve in his busy mind" some other enterprise against the enemy.

He went to New York December 2. He was treated like any other private citizen. A few days after Sir William Johnson arrived, and a crowd went out to meet him with coaches and chariots, and the capital was illuminated in his honor; England conferred upon him a baronetcy,[1] and subsequently sent him a commission as "colonel, agent, and sole superintendent of all the affairs of the Six Nations and other Northern Indians," accompanied with a salary of £600 per annum. At the same time came instructions from the Ministry forbidding each northern province to transact any business with the Indians. Thus Johnson was placed on an independent footing. Shirley was chagrined; but he called a grand congress of governors to meet him in New York on the 12th, to discuss plans for a spring campaign. Fitch of Connecticut, Sharp of Maryland, and Morris of Pennsylvania, were present, besides Hardy, De Lancey, Colonel Schuyler, Colonel Dunbar, Major Rutherford, Sir John St. Clair, and others. Shirley presided. As preparatory to the successful prosecution of a remarkable project for the next year, Ticonderoga was to be attacked by crossing the ice in midwinter, which seemed so feasible that it met with the approval of the Council. Major Rutherford and Staats Long Morris, the son of Judge Lewis Morris, were despatched to England to lay the plan before the Ministry.

The Assembly, however, regarded the Ticonderoga project with coldness. Success is, in public estimation, the criterion of an able chieftain. Fair and plausible as it appeared upon paper, its author had invariably failed in all his military undertakings, and it was not thought worth while to appropriate money for the purpose. Shirley returned to Boston where his wounded pride was soothed by an ovation similar to the one with which New York welcomed Sir William Johnson.

[1] Johnson's baronetcy was dated November 27, 1755.

Hosted by Google

The speaker of the Assembly about this time requested assistance in the necessary correspondence, concerning boundary and other questions, with the agent at the Court of Great Britain, and the city members, — Paulus Richard, William Walton, Henry Cruger, and John Watts, — were appointed a committee for the purpose.

John Watts, as will be remembered, was the son of Robert Watts, and the brother-in-law of Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey. He was married in 1742; and in 1747 (November 13) bought the Rosehill farm, of some one hundred and thirty acres, bounded on the south by Twenty-First Street, on the east by the East River, and, reaching over Madison Square, (which was then a pond of water affording skating facilities in winter,) it stretched along the post-road a considerable distance to the north. It was named from the ancestral estate of the Watts family in Scotland. A handsome mansion-house rose upon a prominent site, from which a broad avenue, lined with graceful elms, extended westerly to the post-road, the gateway being at about the present corner of Twenty-Eighth Street and Fourth Avenue.[1] It was a charming nook, and during its occupancy by the family in summer-time was the favorite resort of the gay aristocracy of the metropolis. Indeed, John Watts and his beautiful wife were so connected with the leading families as to fill an important niche in society.

Their city home (subsequently) was No. 3 Broadway, next the Kennedy mansion near the glacis of Fort George. It was a great old-time edifice, destined to be one of the historic landmarks of the city when nearly all its contemporaries should have passed away. It was elegant in its appointments, and in subsequent years, when large entertainments were given by either family, the rooms of the second story were connected with the Kennedy apartments by a staircase and bridge in the rear. The garden extended to the water, and was overlooked by a broad piazza, which was often kissed by the salt spray in a high wind.[2]

Watts was forty years of age in 1755. He was a master of political economy, a scholar of no ordinary attainments, and a brilliant logician. His letters, while upon the committee of correspondence, were among the finest productions of that decade. His ready mind could meet and solve knotty problems, and his sound judgment was invaluable in the straight-

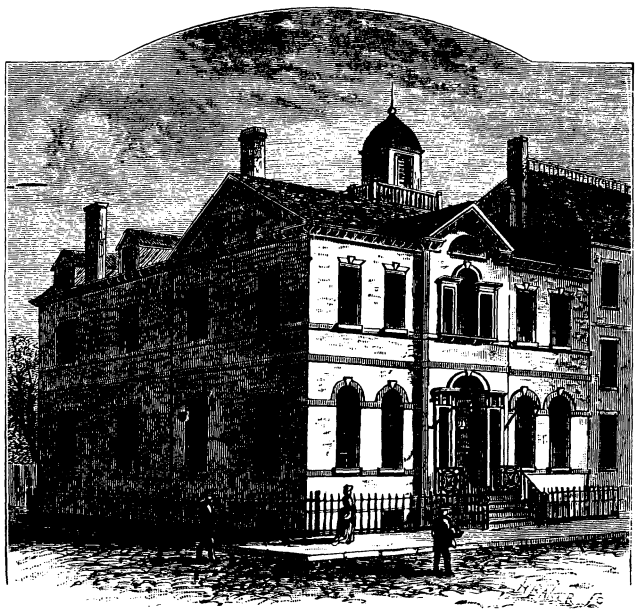
[1] John Watts purchased the Rosehill property of James De Lancey. It was conveyed to the latter, June 24, 1746, by Anna Pritchard. It was originally a portion of the Stuyvesant property, partition having taken place (by writ) between Gerardus Stuyvesant and his sister, Anna Pritchard, April 20, 1742; William Jamison being at that time sheriff of the city and county of New York, and James De Lancey chief justice of the Supreme Court, and this tract falling to the share of Anna Pritchard.

[2] See sketch, page 732.

Hosted by Google

ening of crooked paths. He grew constantly in importance. He was soon appointed to the Council, and in matters of moment his advice was oftener sought by the governor than that of any other member of this august body. He possessed a remarkably cheerful temper, which no disappointment could disturb, and a brain, amid subsequent reverses, full of resource.

His daughter Ann married Archibald Kennedy, afterwards eleventh Earl of Cassilis, and member of the House of Lords. He was the son of



Kennedy Mansion, No. 1 Broadway, before the Revolution.

Hon. Archibald Kennedy, the venerable counselor. He rejoiced in a handsome private fortune which he saw fit to expend in a manner suited to his refined and cultivated tastes. He built No. 1 Broadway (now the Washington Hotel), fashioning it after the most approved English model.[1] It had a broad, handsome front, with a carved doorway in the center,

[1] The impression that Sir Peter Warren built No. 1 Broadway is wholly without foundation. The property in 1742 (the year in which Stone says Sir Peter Warren built the mansion) belonged to the Bayards. In 1745 (June 7) Eve Bayard, the widow of Peter Bayard, sold the lots Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Broadway to Archibald Kennedy, the witnesses to the sale being Philip Van Cortlandt and Peter Schuyler. Neither house was built until some years after this. *Abstract of Title in Book of Deeds* (commenced in 1739), in possession of Major-General J. Watts de Peyster.

Hosted by Google

wide halls, grand staircases, and spacious rooms; the parlor was about fifty feet in length, with a graceful bow opening upon a porch large enough for a cotillon-party. The banqueting-hall was a magnificent apartment. Aside from its extraordinary dimensions, its walls and ceilings were elaborately decorated. Captain Kennedy's eldest son was born in this mansion, who became not only the twelfth Earl of Cassilis, but the first Marquis of Ailsa.



Fraunces' Tavern.

(The old De Lancey Mansion.) For description see page 759.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1755 - 1764.

THE FRENCH WAR.

LETTER OF JAMES ALEXANDER. — SHIRLEY IN BOSTON. — VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK. — DECLARATION OF WAR. — THE EARL OF LOUDOUN. — MAYOR JOHN CRUGER. — NEW YORK OPPRESSED. — BOUNDARY JANGLES. — RIOTS AT LIVINGSTON MANOR. — GOVERNOR HARDY RESIGNS. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. — THE IMMORTAL KITE. — THE POSTAL ROUTES OF AMERICA. — LOSS OF FORT WILLIAM HENRY. — LOUDOUN AND HIS CABBAGES. — RECALL OF LOUDOUN. — CHANGE IN THE ENGLISH MINISTRY. — CAPTURE OF FORT DU QUESNE. — DEFEAT AND RECALL OF ABERCROMBIE. — GENERAL WOLFE. — CAPTURE OF QUEBEC. — GENERAL AMHERST. — WILLIAM WALTON. — THE WALTON HOUSE. — DEATH OF LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR DE LANCEY. — DR. CADWALLADER COLDEN LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK. — GOVERNOR MONCKTON. — DEATH OF GEORGE II. — GEORGE III. — THE EARL OF BUTE. — RESIGNATION OF PITT. — SANDY HOOK LIGHTHOUSE. — SIR JAMES JAY. — THE JAY FAMILY. — JOHN JAY IN COLLEGE. — CONQUEST OF HAVANA. — TREATY OF PEACE. — ENGLAND IN TRIUMPH.

IT was a peculiar winter. No great military event transpired. But every week brought intelligence of some fresh horror in the remote districts. Cruelties were perpetrated in Orange and Ulster Counties. There were murders committed in Duchess County; and there were disturbances at Livingston Manor. Beyond Albany all was terror and confusion. James Alexander wrote to Peter Van Brugh Livingston in December: "The manner of beginning this war must have surprised the nations of Europe, as it has the American colonies, but the way in which it has been carried on is still more surprising. General Braddock was sent over as commander-in-chief, and how the Ministry came to intrust full powers to such a man has perplexed us all; a man of no knowledge, civil or military, who by all accounts had spent his life in the most profligate manner, made no pretensions to morals, and the loose indecency of his conversation showed what company he had been accustomed to frequent. From such an officer nothing could have been expected but disgrace to the British arms."[1] 1755.

[1] *Rutherford Papers.* (In possession of the family, Newark, N. J.) In the same collection is an interesting letter from James Alexander to Peter Van Brugh Livingston, dated

Hosted by Google

Shirley was keeping Boston in commotion. His theories were magnificent, but there was always something in the way of their proving successful. Troops were raised for the half-matured spring campaign, and various detachments were sent to posts along the frontiers. Ann Shirley wrote to a lady in New York: "The young ladies are beginning to hold down their heads and look melancholy; and, indeed, I don't wonder, for by Friday night we sha'n't have a beau left. Poor Boston! what a falling off! But New York will fare no better, for the handsome fellows must all march to the war." The same writer added in a postscript: "Last Sunday I attended Miss Shirley (that was) to church, and according to custom there were a great many people to look at the bride. Her dress was a yellow lutestring silk, trimmed with silver, with one flounce at the bottom, which was esteemed by everybody to be very genteel, and I was not a little pleased with it, as it was in a great measure my taste."[1]

The government at New York was occupied with boundary tangles, debt-bills, and conflicting opinions respecting the course to be pursued in
1756. the conflict with France. Speaker Jones wrote to the agent in
Feb. 23. London, under date of February 23: "We are sitting still. The principal money bill, which is for paying the debts of the government for the time past, has passed the Council, but has not yet received the governor's assent, and is therefore in suspense. By the next packet I may be able to inform you further, particularly with respect to the Jersey line, which is still under consideration."

The bill for meeting the salaries of the ensuing year was framed in direct defiance of the repeated demand of the crown, and the governor was greatly perplexed. The House refused to proceed with any further business, or make the necessary appropriations for the conduct of the war, until his decision should be known. De Lancey suggested to Hardy that the exigency of affairs on the frontier would exculpate him in the eyes of the Ministry, should he concede the point, which was accordingly done. The governor passed the bill, and the victory won by the people

February 11, 1756, in which he speaks tenderly of the recent loss of the "good mother" of his correspondent (the widow of the late Philip Livingston). He writes: "Her very sudden death must have surprised you all, as it did me. I heartily sympathize with you. She was a good woman, and a very kind mother. Few women that I have been acquainted with equalled her in sweetness of temper and good sense. Whatever changes her death may occasion in the family, I hope it will not lessen the union and harmony. Let me recommend you to see each other often, and cultivate intimacy, for, believe me, the credit, the power, and interest of families depend chiefly on this. Interest often connects people who are entire strangers, and sometimes separates those who have the strongest natural ties. Whatever matters of property are to be settled, the sooner it is done the better, and I hope it will be satisfactory to all concerned."

[1] *Rutherford Papers.*

Hosted by Google

over the crown on privilege proved to be lasting. Henceforward the Ministry gave up insisting upon an indefinite support, and in the autumn the House had the supreme satisfaction of hearing from the lips of Hardy himself, that the crown had virtually repealed the instructions to Sir Danvers Osborne which had caused such intense indignation.

England finally declared war against France. There is something novel in this announcement after the record of the past two years. The Ministry seem to have clung to the hope that peace might be established on an amicable footing. On the other hand, the French hardly believed England would come out boldly and endanger her Hanoverian possessions, and continued to claim American territory by force of arms. May 17.

Shirley was recalled, and the Earl of Loudoun, one of the sixteen peers of Scotland, appointed commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America.[1] Governor Hardy announced this fact to the Assembly on the 29th of June. Major-General Abercrombie was placed second in command, and with General Webb and two battalions, sailed in April for this country. Loudoun did not arrive until July. June 29.

Abercrombie stationed himself at Albany. He began his career by sowing discord among the troops, who were waiting to push forward into the country of the enemy. He announced that all regular officers would be over those of the same rank in the provincial service. The consequences were such that General Winslow advised his superior that any attempt to enforce the rule would be disastrous; and the latter yielded, it having been agreed that the regulars should remain and do garrison duty in the forts, while the provincials under their own officers should advance against the French.

As soon as this matter was arranged, Abercrombie proceeded to quarter his troops upon the citizens of Albany. It excited intense disgust. "Go back again," said the mayor of Albany, in behalf of the citizens, — "go back; we want no such protectors, we can defend our frontiers ourselves."

[1] John Campbell, fourth Earl of Loudoun, Baron Mauchlane, one of the sixteen peers of Scotland, and F. R. S., was born in the year 1705. He succeeded to his title on the death of his father in 1731. When the Pretender landed in Scotland in 1745, Lord Loudoun repaired to Inverness and raised a regiment of Highlanders for the crown. On the approach of the enemy, however, he abandoned his position, and retired to the Isle of Skye, with scarcely a show of resistance. This regiment having been broken in 1748, he was made colonel of the Thirtieth Regiment of Foot in 1749. He was appointed major-general in 1755. In February, 1756, he was commissioned governor of Virginia, and was also intrusted with the supreme command of the British forces in North America. His career was not satisfactory to the Ministry, and he was recalled in 1758. *Entick's History of the War*, II. 393. In 1763 or 1764 he was appointed Governor of Edinburgh Castle. He died, unmarried, at Loudoun Castle, Ayrshire, April 27, 1782, aged seventy-seven years.

Hosted by Google

But the troops remained in their comfortable quarters, and fattened at the tables of their helpless hosts.

Nor did relief attend the coming of Loudoun. Governor Hardy followed the pompous general to Albany, accompanied by De Lancey and Judge Chambers. But Loudoun was incapable of grasping the exigencies of the situation, and he was too self-conceited to receive advice. He cautioned Hardy without even a show of courtesy, against meddling with military affairs.

The Marquis de Montcalm had succeeded Dieskau as commander of the French army in America, and while Loudoun was fussing and hurrying, and driving everybody, and really frittering away his time in doing nothing in general or particular, the active energetic French nobleman was on his unobstructed way to invest Oswego. After a brief action the garrison surrendered as prisoners of war. The French Indians, long used to deeds of blood, paid no heed to the terms of capitulation, and with terrific yells and wild leaps, were springing upon their prey to indulge in their customary pastime of horrid butchery, when Montcalm (to his undying honor be it spoken) ordered out a file of soldiers and commanded them to fire upon the infuriated Indians who had disobeyed orders. Six fell dead in the next instant, and the remainder sulkily put up their knives and skulked to their quarters. The garrison, numbering sixteen hundred men, were conveyed safely to Montreal. The two fortresses, Ontario and Oswego, were levelled so completely that hardly a mark of their ever having existed remained to be seen.

The loss of Oswego, instead of stimulating Loudoun to efficient action, had the contrary effect. He did indeed bluster and converse in elevated tones about annihilating Crown Point, but that was all. He sneered at Sir William Johnson's water-bubble, as he styled savage aid, and damned the Indian interest whenever the subject was broached in his hearing.

The speaker of the House wrote to the London agent about the middle of October:[1] "Our disappointment is greater than that of last year, for, instead of taking Crown Point, the enemy have mastered Oswego and carried away all the armed vessels, two hundred whale-boats, cannon, provision, and warlike stores. O shameful behavior of our forces! We have now no footing on Lake Ontario; it is all in the uninterrupted possession of the enemy, who will doubtless dispossess us of whatever we have remaining if not suddenly stopped. As for our forces on the

[1] This letter was the production of the committee of city members, — John Watts, Henry Cruger, William Walton, and Peter De Lancey (the latter had recently taken the place of Paulus Richard), — and is supposed to have been drafted by Henry Cruger, who was subsequently a member of the British Parliament.

Hosted by Google

northern frontier, both regulars and provincials, we shall probably hear of no action by them unless the enemy force them to it. If some more vigorous resolutions are not made in England, and seasonably executed, we must inevitably fall a prey to the prevailing power of France. We live in hopes that a vigorous push will be made for the reduction of Canada, which seems the only measure that can secure us. I told you, in my letter of July 2, that you should have a just estimate of the expenses of this year. I cannot at present enumerate particulars, neither does it appear necessary. We emitted £ 52,000 bills of credit last spring, to be redeemed by taxes on estates, real and personal, which I expect will all be expended in the pay of our forces, and other necessaries attending this state of warfare, before the end of the year. Our governor has acquainted us with the alteration of the instruction relating to the permanent salary; but at the same time insists upon a larger allowance than his predecessors have had, under pretense of the alteration in the value of our currency. How far this may occasion differences between him and the Assembly I cannot yet foresee; perhaps my next may inform you. Inclosed you have a note of thanks to Messrs. Hamburg and Tomilson, merchants in London, for their extraordinary care with respect to the money granted by Parliament, and you are desired to wait on those gentlemen with it. The Assembly is now sitting, and when the session ends I shall write further to you."

Loudoun visited two or three of the northern forts, admired the autumnal forests with their gorgeous hues, expressed in forcible expletives his deep disgust at the want of decent roads, took cold in a November storm, and returned to Albany to dismiss the militia to their firesides for the winter, and provide quarters for the regulars.

Of the latter he sent two thousand four hundred to New York with orders for the corporation to billet them upon the citizens. John Cruger (son of the former mayor, and brother of Henry Cruger) had just been appointed to the mayoralty. The message from Loudoun was read in the Common Council, and neither its style nor import relished. The soldiers were crowded into the barracks, and the officers (about fifty) left to find lodgings for themselves.

Loudoun came to New York in December in a towering rage. He summoned Mayor Cruger before him, and demanded that his officers, of every rank, should have free quarters in the city. Cruger remonstrated, and in behalf of the citizens pleaded their rights as Englishmen. Loudoun checked him with an oath, and told him such was the custom everywhere, and if difficulties were raised he would convene all the troops in America and himself billet them upon the people.

Hosted by Google

Cruger asked for time to consult the aldermen. The death of his sister made it necessary to delay an answer until her funeral obsequies were performed. Loudoun insisted upon speedy attention to his orders. The



Mayor John Cruger, afterward one of the founders and first president of the Chamber of Commerce.

citizens raved. The mayor and aldermen were at their wits' ends concerning the course to be pursued. They hurried to the governor for counsel. He was reticent. They called a meeting of the judges of the Supreme Court, and the city members of the Assembly, to investigate the laws upon the subject. Chief Justice De Lancey declined to give an extra-judicial opinion. John Watts spoke his mind in favor of the people with remarkable force; he said that free quarters were against the common law. Henry Cruger manfully asserted that the arbitrary conduct of the commander-in-chief was illiberal and illegal. Yet it was not clear how far opposition might be persisted in without danger of prosecutions. Two committees were appointed, — one to present a memorial to the governor asking his mediation, the other to visit Loudoun. Of the latter only the mayor was admitted to the lordly presence. As soon as Loudoun caught the spirit of the object of the committee, he exclaimed, "God d—n my blood! if you do not give my officers free quarters this day, I will order

Hosted by Google

here every man under my command and billet them upon the city." He immediately quartered six upon Oliver De Lancey. This was too much for the high-strung aristocrat, who attempted to turn them out of doors. Loudoun immediately sent half a dozen more to add to the measure of De Lancey's wrath. The latter threatened to leave the country if they were not removed. "I shall be glad of it," replied the merciless potentate, "for then the troops will have your whole house." The excitement was intense. But there was no help at hand, and, as the citizens declined being hospitable, a private subscription remedied matters for the time, while the oppressor was regarded with supreme abhorrence.

Speaker Jones wrote to the agent at the English Court: "What the next summer will produce the Almighty only knows. I assure you our situation is extremely distressing. New York, as you know, is the principal seat of the present war, and is harassed and burdened in all shapes; soldiers quartered upon us without pay, our horses and carriages used at pleasure, some broken, and others burned and destroyed by the enemy, our militia forced to make long marches in every direction, and our people unable to attend to their usual occupations. To this may be added another heavy expense, namely, the great number of French sent here from Acadia by Governor Lawrence, and the prisoners taken at the battle of Lake George, in September, 1755, with many others brought in by privateers. Our £52,000 are all used, and we are breaking in upon the present made us by Parliament, which in this expensive state of things cannot last long. Unless we have further aid from England we must sink under the weight of these excessive pressures."

Loudoun summoned a congress of governors to meet him in New York just prior to the winter holidays, and with offensive arrogance charged the disasters of the war to the negligence and stinginess of the colonies. He talked airily about the next year's campaign, and demanded additional troops and supplies, which were provided. He afterwards proceeded through Connecticut to Boston, much to the relief of the people of New York, who detested him to such a degree that his very presence in the city was almost intolerable.

Hardy convened the Assembly on the 16th of February, with a view to meet the requisitions of Loudoun, and also to communicate the in- **1757.** telligence that the crown was about to send additional reinforce- **Feb. 16.** ments to the aid of the colonies. Other weighty matters demanded immediate attention. The disputes with Massachusetts and New Jersey concerning boundaries were assuming proportions only secondary to the snarl between England and France. The commotions among neighbors along the borders were lamentable in the extreme. Livingston Manor

Hosted by Google

had been the scene of several startling riots. And just now news came that the sheriff in the discharge of his duty had been roughly handled, and a man whom he called to his aid instantly killed. The Stockbridge Indians were taking sides. They had, in many instances, sold lands twice over to interested parties, in disregard of former patents. They had carried off one of Livingston's tenants that a Sheffield farmer might possess himself of the premises upon the strength of one of their doubtful titles. Mrs. Livingston wrote to her husband (who was one of the members of the House) in New York, that the family were in constant fear of some hostile movement on the part of the savages, who sneaked about among the tenants of the manor in bands, mysteriously, and not infrequently came into the grounds of the manor-house and gesticulated in a threatening manner. Livingston petitioned the government for a company of soldiers to guard his possessions. Hardy recommended that commissioners at the public expense be at once appointed to settle the chronic controversy.

At the same time a bloody war was raging in Pennsylvania, which had grown out of alleged deceits practiced upon the Delawares in the sale of their lands. Sir William Johnson had listened to the recital of similar grievances ever since he took up his abode in the vicinity of the Six Nations, and became superintendent of Indian affairs. He believed that fraudulent purchases, or those which the Indians claimed as such, should be surrendered. He had repeatedly expressed his views to the Ministry and to the colonial governors. Hardy was of the same way of thinking, and recommended to the Assembly the passage of a law for vacating all grants, exorbitant or otherwise, which the Indians considered fraudulent. He said it appeared to him, in the alarming posture of affairs, not only a *just* but a *necessary* measure; the fickle warriors must be induced if possible to throw their whole assistance into the scale.

Sir Charles had, six months prior to this, proposed an act for annulling certain land-patents in Central and Western New York, upon the ground of their having been fraudulently obtained from the Indians, and the parties interested had traced it to the direct influence of Johnson.

The reply of the House to the governor's message was a carefully considered document. It embodied no backwardness in the way of providing troops and warlike supplies for the coming year, "that, whatever may be the fate of our cause, we may not be in any way instrumental to our ruin, by tedious delays, timid resolutions, or an ill-timed parsimony." With respect to the boundary question, duty did not seem to stand out in quite so bold a light. The expense of commissioners would be a fatal outlay in this time of trial. The governors of those colonies with whom the dis-

Hosted by Google

putes raged ought to preserve peace and order in their respective borders until the common enemy should be repelled, and the fact established that either possessed lands to divide or jurisdiction to settle. "We would humbly observe that a line of a much more serious nature at present engages our whole attention and justly claims the substance we have to spare." [1]

As to the fraudulent grants of land, it was admitted that such had undoubtedly retarded settlements, and given the Indians cause of complaint, but that the owners had paid considerable sums, first to the Indians for their rights, and afterwards to the governor and other civil officers for the patents, — often more than the lands were worth, — and to deprive such owners of their possessions would be harsh and unjust. As affairs stood now, no settlements could be made upon them, and the Indians would continue to be the sole occupants; thus the consideration of the subject might as well be postponed. "Ah," said Sir William Johnson to Hardy, "with half a dozen Livingstons in the House, all interested in their fathers' old disputed patent, and the De Lanceys owning the rich tract twenty miles in length on the banks of the Mohawk near Wood Creek, what else could have been expected!"

Governor Hardy had long since applied to the Lords of Trade for permission to resign his government and re-enter the navy. He was aware of his own incapacity. One branch of his office was to preside as chancellor. The first time the court opened there was a vacant seat between Judge Chambers and Judge Horsemanden. The hall became crowded and still no governor. Presently the chief justice made his appearance, struggling through the dense mass of people towards the bench. His face wore a troubled expression, as if he was not quite satisfied with the propriety of taking such a step. The judges arose, and courteously placed him upon the bench, where he continued until two prisoners, one charged for murder and the other with theft, were arraigned and taken from the bar. The same day was appointed for arguing a demurrer to a bill in Chancery before the governor. There was considerable delay. Finally some of the lawyers were invited to his Excellency's private room, where he apologized for detaining them, by saying that he had desired the chief justice to be present and he had not yet come. "I can't take upon myself," he said, "to say I understand the law. I have been justice of the peace in England, but my knowledge, gentlemen, relates to the sea; that is my sphere. If you want to know when the wind and tide suit for going down to Sandy Hook, I can tell you. How can a captain of a ship understand your demurrers in law?" De Lancey

[1] *Journals of the Assembly.*

Hosted by Google

came in to the delight of the sailor-executive; when the debate took place, the governor sat awkwardly by the side of the able and elegant chief justice, who pronounced the decree and dictated the entry in the register. "I beseech you, gentlemen," said Hardy, "to bring these kind of questions before me as seldom as possible. If you ever dispute about a fact, I can search the depositions, and perhaps tell you who has the best of it; but I know nothing about your points of law."

The Lords of Trade were open to conviction; Hardy was out of his sphere, and they made him a rear-admiral in the contemplated naval expedition against Canada. He sailed at midnight on the 2nd of July, to join the forces at Boston, and the next morning De Lancey took the oaths, and continued in the supreme command of the province until his death.

In the mean time Morris had disputed with his Assembly in Pennsylvania, until, lover of disputations as he was, he cared to indulge in it no longer. The Assembly could not please him, nor frame a bill that he would sign. He showed his instructions, by which it was plainly apparent that only one course had been open to him. There was a rapid fire of addresses and replies, which had no effect, and could have none, except to exasperate. Morris, therefore, forwarded to England his resignation, and held his place only until his successor should arrive.

Franklin relates many anecdotes of his intercourse with Morris, while the latter occupied the gubernatorial chair. One afternoon in the height of the public quarrel the two notables met in the street: "Franklin," said Morris, "you must go home with me and spend the evening; I am to have some company whom you will like." Arm in arm, they proceeded to Morris's house. In gay conversation over their wine after supper, Morris remarked jestingly, that he "much admired the idea of Sancho Panza, who, when it was proposed to give him a government, requested it might be a government of blacks; as then, if he could not agree with his people, he might sell them." One of the guests turned to Franklin and said, "Why do you continue to side with the Quakers? Had you not better sell them? The proprietor would give you a good price." "Oh!" replied Franklin, "the governor here has not yet *blacked* them enough."

It was in July, 1756, that Morris ceased to govern Pennsylvania, and William Denny ruled in his stead. "Change of devils is blithesome" (according to the Scotch proverb), wrote William Franklin. After a brief lull the strife and the bitterness arose again, and the Assembly and the new governor could agree upon nothing.

Franklin, who continued the leader of the popular party, was appointed by the House, agent of the province to proceed to England for the trans-

Hosted by Google

action of important affairs, and his son, William Franklin, was permitted to resign his office of clerk of the House, and accompany his father. £1,500 were voted for the expenses of the voyage and residence in London.

It was five years since Franklin in a June thunder-storm had experimented with the immortal kite. Who does not know the story? How he fashioned his kite and stole away, upon the approach of a storm, to a common, near an old cow-shed; how, wishing to avoid the ridicule of possible failure, he told no one except his son, a young man of twenty-two; how father and son waited under the shed, presenting the spectacle (if there had been any one to behold it) of two escaped lunatics trying to fly a kite in the rain; how, when both were ready to despair of success, the fibers of the hempen string began to rise, as a boy's hair rises when he stands on the insulating-stool; how the trembling hand was applied to the key, how the Leyden phial was charged, how the wet kite was drawn in, and how the triumphant philosopher went home the happiest man in Christendom. Who does not love to ponder upon the progress, henceforward, of Franklin's electrical studies, and see him bring the lightning into his library for constant examination? He tried it upon magnets, he tried it *in vacuo*, he tried it upon the sick, he tried it upon the well, he tried it upon animals, he tried it upon men. He tried electricity excited by friction, electricity drawn from the clouds, electricity generated in the cold and glittering winter nights, and the electricity of the electric eel. He had electrical correspondents everywhere. Masters of ships who encountered remarkable thunder-storms sent narratives of what they had seen to him. Lightning-rods made their way slowly into use. They were greatly feared, however. An earthquake occurred in 1755, and a good New England divine preached a sermon upon the subject, in which he contended that the lightning-rods, by accumulating the electricity in the earth, had produced the earthquake. Science encountered all manner of obstacles. But Benjamin Franklin became the acknowledged head of the electricians of the world.

In 1753, he had been commissioned postmaster-general for America. He immediately commenced improvements in this branch of the public service. There were as yet no mail-coaches; the carriers rode on horseback. America, however, was not far behind England. A Londoner could not send a letter to Edinburgh and receive an answer in less than ten days, and only thus speedily in case weather and highwaymen permitted. It was not uncommon then for a post-rider to leave London with only five or six letters for Edinburgh in his bag; on one occasion it is recorded that he carried but one letter.

Hosted by Google

The office of postmaster-general of America was created in 1692. Twenty years before, New York had established the first mail-route (monthly) to Boston. As late as 1704 no post-rider went farther north than Boston, or farther south than Philadelphia. In 1753 the line of posts still began at Boston, and extended as far south as Charleston.[1] There was no post into the interior of the country. Franklin named his son controller of the post-office, who managed its details for many years. He himself set out on a tour of inspection, and, traveling patiently over the routes, erected mile-stones (some of which are still standing), and established a new postal system, which was of the greatest advantage to the colonies. Instead of one mail a week in summer and one in two weeks in winter, between New York and Philadelphia, he soon started a mail from each of these cities three times a week in summer and once a week in winter. To get an answer from Boston a Philadelphian had been obliged to wait six weeks; the time was quickly reduced to three weeks. He reduced the rates of postage and instituted other improvements. And it was not a moment too soon, for all these better facilities for transmitting intelligence, were put into constant requisition in the organization of defense against the combined forces of a savage and civilized foe.

Franklin was five months in getting from Philadelphia to London. He left home on the 4th of April, traveling on horseback through New Jersey in order to take one of two packet-ships at New York which were ready to sail, and waiting only for Lord Loudoun to give the order. Loudoun had been to Philadelphia ostensibly to interpose between the governor and the Assembly. Franklin wrote afterwards: "I wondered much how such a man came to be intrusted with so important a business as the conduct of a great army; but, since having seen more of the world, and the means of obtaining and motives for giving places and employments, my wonder has diminished." It was *eleven* weeks before Loudoun permitted the packet to sail. Never was there a greater marvel of dilatoriness and procrastination than the commander-in-chief of the British army in America. Never were great interests so trifled with as by him. His indecision and indolence almost tax our credulity. His to-morrow never dawned. The packets were detained for his lordship to finish letters. Franklin went one morning to call upon Loudoun, and found in the antechamber an express messenger from Philadelphia, who said he had orders to call for the general's answer to the governor, the next morning at nine o'clock, and should set out immediately for home. Franklin hastened to his quarters, and, preparing a bundle of letters for his family, placed them in the messenger's hands. A fortnight afterward Franklin met Innis, the messenger, again

[1] Many of these roads were mere bridle-paths through the forest.

Hosted by Google

in the same place, and exclaimed, "What! so soon returned?" "Returned; no, I am not gone yet," replied Innis. "How so?" asked Franklin. "I have called here this and every morning these two weeks past for his lordship's letters, and they are not yet ready," said Innis. "Is that possible," exclaimed Franklin, "when he is so great a writer? for I see him constantly at his escritoire." "Yes," said Innis satirically; "but he is like St. George on the signs, — always on horseback, and never rides on."

Franklin could do nothing but dance attendance upon Loudoun, and enjoy the dinners which were given him quietly by De Lancey, and Cruger, and others. Loudoun treated him with the utmost politeness, often inviting him to dinner, and sometimes asking his advice; but every matter of business was postponed.

The fleet was finally ready to sail for Halifax, and the packet was ordered to attend Loudoun until his despatches should be ready. When five days out at sea, it was permitted to change its course and cross the Atlantic with its philosophic passengers.

Loudoun reached his destination the last day of June. He was joined, July 9, by Admiral Holburn, with sixteen ships of the line, and by Lord Howe with six thousand disciplined troops, thus increasing the land force to eleven thousand well-appointed and effective men. It was a beautiful, balmy summer, everything was favorable, but Loudoun was not disposed to move rashly. He laid out a vegetable garden and a fine parade-ground, and exercised his men in sham attacks upon sham forts, and finally altered his mind in regard to aggressive projects, and returned to New York with all his troops.

Montcalm took the opportunity, while Loudoun was amusing himself with his cabbages at Halifax, to swoop down upon Fort William Henry. General Webb was at Fort Edward with four thousand or more men, frantically calling to De Lancey and Sir William Johnson for help, but made no effort to go to the relief of the besieged. The militia were disgusted with their incompetent leaders, and deserted in great numbers. In one instance, out of a company of forty men, stationed at Fort Edward, ten only were left. Loudoun presently inundated New York City with his soldiers, and talked about encamping on Long Island for the defense of the continent.

Rumors that a large force of French and Indians were preparing to descend upon the settlements, reached Sir William Johnson very soon after the surrender of Fort William Henry. He wrote a plain letter to Abercrombie, telling him that the regulars stationed at the forts were arrogant and self-sufficient, and of no earthly use in protecting the

Hosted by Google

settlers. Men qualified to act as rangers were wanted, who might be continually employed in scouring the country in search of scalping-parties. The garrison should also be increased, that effectual resistance might be made in case the enemy appeared in force. Abercrombie gave no heed to the advice. He was in Albany, drinking wine and eating good suppers. All at once, about three o'clock on the morning of November 12, sixty or more families residing at the German Flats were roused from their slumbers by the terrible war-whoop. The forts were burned, and the dwellings set on fire. The savages stationed themselves near the doors of each house, and tomahawked the inmates as they rushed out to avoid the flames. Forty persons were inhumanly massacred, and one hundred and fifty carried into captivity. The enemy took away with them vast quantities of grain and money, besides three thousand horned cattle and the same number of sheep. The excitement was universal. The whole Mohawk Valley was in a wild panic, and the settlers hastened to send their effects to Albany and other places, and at one time it seemed as if the settlements would be entirely depopulated.

Loudoun was also at Albany when this affair occurred, and attributed the disaster entirely to the mismanagement of Indian affairs, and the treachery of the savages themselves. His generals busied their minds with charging the responsibility upon each other. Alas! what could have been expected from officers whom children might outwit or terrify with popguns?

Loudoun blustered. Blustering was his favorite pastime. He talked about making war upon the Six Nations, because some of them had been won over to Montcalm's interest through admiration of his superior bravery, and were of the murderous band who fell upon the German Flats. The very suggestion filled New York with horror. "Strike but one blow in that direction and we are lost," said Sir William Johnson. Colonel Peter Schuyler, who had been taken prisoner at the surrender of Oswego, left Quebec, October 22, and reached Albany about the middle of November, on parole, to return in May. He urged Loudoun to abandon the mad project of inaugurating hostilities with the Indians; and other vigorous counsels fell thick as snow-flakes about the commander's head.

Colonel Peter Schuyler was the son of Arent Schuyler of New Jersey. He had, since 1746, commanded the New Jersey forces, and was considered one of the ablest of the colonial officers. His arrival in New York caused great rejoicing. The city was illuminated, a bonfire kindled on the common, and an elegant entertainment given him at the "King's Arms Tavern." The next day (Sunday) he set out for his home on the

Hosted by Google

east side of the Passaic River just above Newark, where he was saluted with thirteen discharges of cannon; and the following evening Newark was illuminated in his honor, bonfires kindled, and a grand banquet tendered him by the principal citizens. The period of his parole expired, and all efforts for his exchange having failed, he proceeded bravely to deliver himself over to Montcalm, then at Ticonderoga, who forwarded him to Montreal. He was empowered by Abercrombie to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, and in November (1758) succeeded in exchanging himself for Sieur de Noyau, the commander at Fort Frontenac captured by Bradstreet. He returned at once to New York, bringing with him twenty-six women and twelve children, whom he had redeemed from captivity with his own purse, and had fed for weeks from his own table. His benevolences while in Canada alleviated much of the suffering to which the English prisoners were subjected. Soon after his release he again led the New Jersey soldiers into Canada, and was one of the victorious band who entered Montreal when that city surrendered in 1760. His wife was Mary, daughter of John Walter, a man of great wealth, residing on Hanover Square, New York. His only daughter, Catharine, became the first wife of Archibald Kennedy (eleventh Earl of Cassilis).[1]

The home of the Schuylers on the Passaic was a great square stone and brick dwelling, which is still standing upon a beautiful site opposite the little city of Belleville. In its palmy days the lawns and gardens extended over many acres and to the water's edge, and for half a century the Schuyler deer-parks were pronounced the finest in America.[2]

[1] Hon. Archibald Kennedy, the receiver-general, counselor, etc., secured, in 1724, a magnificent estate known as the Duke's farm in New Jersey. After his death, in 1763, it came into possession of his son Archibald, who, marrying Catharine Schuyler, heiress of not only the extensive estates of her father and mother, and of her grandfather, John Walter, but of Richard Jones, became a very rich man. The younger Kennedy was appointed captain in the Royal Navy in 1753. After the death of his first wife he married Ann, daughter of Hon. John Watts (April 27, 1769).

[2] Arent Schuyler (the ancestor of the New Jersey branch of the Schuyler family, see page 154) bought, in company with Lieutenant-Governor Brockholls, over four thousand acres of land at New Barbadoes Neck, in 1695, and received a patent from Governor Fletcher in 1697. It was probably as late as 1710 before he went there to reside. The property proved of great value through the discovery of copper. A negro slave while ploughing one day turned up a greenish heavy stone, which he took to his master, and which Schuyler sent to England for analyzation. It was found to contain eighty per cent copper. Schuyler desired to reward the lucky slave, and told him to name three things which he most desired and they should be granted him. The gentleman of color asked, first, that he might remain with his master as long as he lived; second, that he might have all the tobacco he could smoke; and third, that he might have a dressing-gown like his master's with big brass buttons. Schuyler suggested that he should ask for something of more value. Upon mature reflection the negro filled the measure of his earthly happiness, by the request *that he might have a little more*

Hosted by Google



It is doubtful whether Loudoun would have put his threats into execution in any event. He was shortly disposing his troops through the provinces for the winter, quartering them upon the people in a magisterial manner which gave fresh and general offense.

De Lancey convened the Assembly in December, but the small-pox was raging in the city to such an alarming extent that they met in an "out-house" (a good

tobacco. Schuyler shipped considerable quantities of ore to the Bristol copper and brass works, England. His son John worked the mine still more extensively. In 1761 an engine was brought out from England, and with it came, as engineer, Josiah Hornblower, the father of the eminent chief justice of New Jersey. In 1765 the building and engine were destroyed by fire, and remained in ruins until 1793.

The children of Arent Schuyler were : 1, Philip, who married Hester, daughter of Isaac Kingsland (Isaac Kingsland was the founder of the honorable family of that name in New Jersey, whose son Edmund married the daughter of Judge Pinhorne, and was the grandfather of Elizabeth Kingsland, who became the wife of Josiah Hornblower, and mother of the chief justice), was a member of the New Jersey Assembly, and a large land-owner, a portion of his estate being now known as Pompton, in Passaic County, where many of his descendants reside, — his son Carparus had an only daughter, who married General William Colfax of Pompton, in 1783, and was the grandmother of Schuyler Colfax, late Vice-President of the United States ; 2, Olivia ; 3, Casparus, who settled in Burlington, New Jersey ; 4, John, who married Ann Van Rensselaer, and inherited the homestead and mine on the Passaic, — his son, Arent J., married his cousin, Swan Schuyler (in 1772), whose son, John A., married, 1, Eliza Kip, and, 2, Catharine Van Rensselaer, and the seven children of the latter intermarried with the principal families of New York and New Jersey, their descendants filling at the present time important positions in society ; 5, Peter, the famous military commander above mentioned, who died at his home on the Passaic, Sunday, March 7, 1762 ; 6, Adonijah, who married Gertrude Van Rensselaer, and had seven children (it was his daughter Swan who married her cousin Arent J.) ; 7, Eve, who married Peter Bayard of New York, and received from her father the gift of a valuable lot on Broadway ; 8, Cornelia, who married Pierre Guillaume, the younger son of Hon. Abraham De Peyster, first treasurer of the New York province. She also received from her father a lot on Broadway, and several negro slaves.

Hosted by Google

substantial stone dwelling which was occupied by his overseer) upon his own farm above Canal Street. Two of the newspapers of the day indulged in a strain of political sarcasm by speaking of the "*Parliament of New York sitting at present in Mr. De Lancey's kitchen.*"

One of the most important subjects before the House at this session, was to divert a part of the funds raised for fortifications to the construction of barracks for the soldiers, in order to relieve private families upon whom they had been billeted by Loudoun. The city corporation offered to replace the money.[1] Then there was the maintenance of prisoners, the defense of the frontiers, and the salaries of the year to be looked after; and laws to be passed for restraining the king's troops from intemperance, for stricter discipline among the militia, for regulating the staples of flour, beef, pork, and butter, for continuing the excise upon tea, for a poll-tax upon negro slaves, and tonnage duty upon all vessels, not excepting those from Great Britain. A law was also passed to prolong the currency of the bills of credit, the royal inhibition to the contrary, notwithstanding.

Thus ended 1757. It is not singular that New York should have grown suspicious, inquisitive, and cautious; that Loudoun was regarded with contempt whenever he inflicted his presence upon the city; that his military skill, courage, and integrity were called severely in question; that men spoke openly of the "Cabbage Planting Expedition"; that they laughed incredulously when a winter attack upon Ticonderoga was proposed; that witty jokes circulated freely concerning the hand-sleds and snow-shoes that were being made at Albany, and the worsted caps which were advertised "wanted." After a few weeks nothing more was heard of this latter undertaking. General Webb spent the winter with Loudoun in New York, and they both devoted themselves to such amusements, concerts, theatrical performances, assemblies, etc., as the city afforded, and played cards and drank wine the remainder of the time. **1758.**

The repeated failures of the British arms had exasperated the nation. A change in the Ministry wrought a new phase in military operations. The elder Pitt (who succeeded the silly Newcastle) declared in Parliament that he never could ascertain what Lord Loudoun was doing in America. His recall, and also that of General Webb, soon followed. Abercrombie, who had remained quietly at Albany, was appointed to the chief command. **March.**

[1] Among the aldermen of New York at this time were, Philip Livingston, Nicholas Roosevelt, Leonard Lispenard, Pierre De Peyster, Abraham De Peyster, William Coventry, Oliver De Lancey, Albert Herring, Theodorus Van Wyck, Joris Johnson, and John Bogart, Jr.

Hosted by Google

A campaign against Canada was planned upon a gigantic basis, and this time seemed invested with the elements of fact. The crown was to furnish all the arms, ammunition, provisions, tents, boats, etc.; the colonies were to raise as many men as their population would warrant, and the governors were desired to buy clothing, appoint officers, and pay troops, with a promise of Parliamentary reimbursement. The provincial colonels were to be made brigadier-generals, and the lieutenant-colonels were to rank as colonels.

Nothing could be more grateful to the people than these tidings. Every town and hamlet were at once drained for men and means. The New York Assembly promised liberal aid without a moment's hesitation. Money was raised for bounties, for compensation, and for the support of every poor soldier's family during his absence. Bills were emitted for £100,000, to be cancelled by a tax for nine years. There was not a jar among the legislators during the spring session of the Assembly; they went to their homes at the end of a month, and all eyes were turned towards the movements which were to deliver New York and her sister colonies from a terrible foe.

Three formidable expeditions were planned. That against Quebec was placed under the command of General Wolfe. One of the lords remonstrated with the king concerning this appointment; Wolfe was represented as a "young, rash madman." "If he is mad, I hope he will bite some of my generals," was the vexed reply. General Amherst was to accomplish the conquest of Cape Breton and vicinity. The third enterprise was against Fort Du Quesne and other French posts on the Ohio.

Preparations went on vigorously and with great spirit. Abercrombie determined to lead the forces destined for Ticonderoga in person. Sir William Johnson was obliged to defend the Mohawk Valley, where the French and Indians suddenly destroyed a beautiful town, massacring every inhabitant save two persons, in order, it was supposed, to create a diversion, and thereby enable them to repel the expected invasion.

It was a proud and courageous army that rendezvoused at the head of Lake George, upon the site of the charred ruins of Fort William Henry, on the morning of July 5, 1758. Seven thousand British troops of the line in full uniform, and upwards of ten thousand provincials, were about to embark for Ticonderoga. The spectacle was imposing. The flotilla consisted of nine hundred bateaux, and one hundred and thirty-five whale-boats, together with rafts to convey stores, ammunition, and artillery. The accomplished Lord Howe, distinguished alike for his gallantry and his daring, was the life and soul of the enterprise. Lord John Murray was there, with his Highland regiment in costume and with

July 5.

Hosted by Google

bagpipes. Young noblemen from Old England, of chivalrous bearing and high promise, nodded their gay plumes in every direction, and an equally fine array of proud-spirited colonial officers paraded with their companies as if marching to a grand review. The armed host started from its repose at early dawn, and while the sun was peeping over the mountains and gathering up the mists from the crystal waters of the pretty sequestered lake, embarked for the deeper solitudes, to settle in bloody conflict the disputes between the rival courts of St. James and St. Cloud, a thousand leagues away.

Victory was a foregone conclusion. Every heart beat high with joyous expectation. The exhilarating notes of the trumpet, the roll of drums, and the swell of cheerful voices echoed from the hills as the barges streamed over Lake George, shifting and changing places as convenience required; and favorite airs from well-appointed regimental bands added every now and then to the hilarity of the occasion. With the bright-colored uniforms, the banners of the different regiments floating on the breeze, the dazzling glitter of polished steel, and the flashing of oars, the scene must have resembled some great aquatic pageant.

About noon of the following day the troops landed in good order in a cove upon the west side of the lake, where they formed into four columns and began their march, leaving the artillery and heavy baggage behind until bridges could be built. Abercrombie intended to hurry forward and carry Ticonderoga by storm, before the reinforcements which were hastening to the relief of Montcalm could arrive. But he was inexperienced in the matter of pushing troops through dense woods, and over morasses covered with thick and tangled underbrush. The advance-guard lost their way, and fell in with a body of the enemy; in the skirmish which ensued Lord Howe fell. His loss threw a damper over the entire army. Abercrombie was irresolute, and uncertain which way to steer. His guides were bewildered; and he finally drew back his men to the shore of the lake.

Meanwhile Bradstreet, with Rogers and four hundred rangers, pushed ahead, built bridges, and took possession of some saw-mills which the French had erected at the lower rapids, two miles from Ticonderoga. These rapids are where the waters of Lake George fall about one hundred and fifty-seven feet in their descent through the outlet into Lake Champlain. The energy of the provincial colonel reassured Abercrombie, who proceeded with the army to the saw-mills, and sent his chief engineer with a few rangers to reconnoiter the enemy's works.

They returned just at dusk. The engineer reported that the defenses of the French would offer but a feeble resistance to the charge of the

Hosted by Google

British bayonet. Stark, who had accompanied him, in command of the rangers, was of a different opinion. But Abercrombie gave orders to advance without artillery on the morning of the 8th, and carry the fortress at the point of the bayonet. As the troops were leaving the encampment they were overtaken by Sir William Johnson with three hundred Indians. The English advanced gallantly, but at the first onset were thrown into confusion by the branches of trees which Montcalm had placed for a hundred yards in front of the log breastwork. At a signal from Montcalm, who stood with his coat off in one of the trenches, a terrific fire was opened upon them from swivels and small-arms. In vain they rallied and attempted to penetrate through the tree-tops. The more they struggled the more they became entangled. Rank after rank was mowed down by the well-directed fire of the enemy. Driven from the left, they attempted the center, then the right, and at last retreated in the utmost disorder, having lost in killed and wounded nineteen hundred and sixty-seven men.[1]

Abercrombie had remained at the saw-mills, and upon the first news of the defeat started for Lake George. Montcalm spent the night in piling up more trees and otherwise strengthening his defenses, supposing that the main body of the English army would appear with their artillery in the morning. Instead, twelve thousand or more men were rushing in wild affright after their valorous commander. Reaching the landing about daybreak, they made for the bateaux, and would have sunk the greater portion of them, had not Colonel Bradstreet by his coolness convinced them that there was no immediate danger, and prevailed upon them to embark quietly and in good order. As for Abercrombie himself, he did not breathe freely until the waters of Lake George separated him from the enemy, and his artillery and ammunition were fairly on their way to Albany.

This mortifying repulse created the utmost consternation throughout the colonies. Absurd rumors were quickly spread and religiously believed. With the news of Lord Howe's death it was reported that five thousand English troops had been blown up with a mine at Ticonderoga, three thousand of whom were from New York and New Jersey. The inhabitants along the Hudson and Mohawk Valleys were seized with a panic. They supposed the French army was on its march to Albany.

[1] Among those killed in the attack upon Ticonderoga was Major John Rutherford, a member of the governor's council of New York since 1744. *Pennsylvania Archives*, III. 475. In the same fatal expedition Oliver De Lancey served under Abercrombie as colonel-in-chief of the New York forces, and for his valuable services, and "the singular care of the troops under his command," afterwards received the thanks of the Assembly.

Hosted by Google

Some said it had already reached Fort Edward. The guards were doubled at Albany and Schenectady, and for additional protection, large numbers of men, stationed in the block houses, kept strict watch day and night.

Bradstreet felt the disgrace keenly, and importuned with such spirit to be allowed to lead an expedition to Fort Frontenac, that permission was finally granted. With a force of twenty-seven hundred provincials, eleven hundred of whom were New-Yorkers, and forty-two Iroquois warriors, he embarked in open boats upon Lake Ontario. On the 26th of August he made a successful attack upon the French fortress, which surrendered; Bradstreet not losing a man, and having only two wounded. It was a victory which more than compensated for the defeat of Abercrombie, as by it Lake Ontario was wrested from the enemy (not one French vessel was left upon the lake), and all communication effectually obstructed between Canada and her posts in the Ohio Valley.

Pitt understood the topography of America, and perceived at once the value of Bradstreet's exploit. The next step was to obtain possession of Fort Du Quesne. General Forbes, who had the expedition in charge, did not move with his forces until autumn; and even then his progress was attended with blunders and delays. He proposed to send fifteen hundred men in advance to open a new road, which he claimed would save sixty miles of tedious travel. Washington vigorously objected; he was familiar with the country, and said such a course would be attended with danger and probable destruction. Forbes was taken ill on the way, and the contractors were remiss in furnishing the required number of wagons for transportation of stores. It was the middle of September when the army reached Raystown. Forbes sent forward an advance party of two thousand men, a portion of whom fell into an ambush and were completely routed, losing three hundred in killed or wounded. Nineteen officers were carried prisoners into Canada. Forbes was on the 5th of November within forty miles of his destination, but the weather was getting so cold that it was decided to go into winter quarters. Washington was annoyed beyond measure at such a turn in events. He learned from prisoners that the garrison at Fort Du Quesne was in no condition to resist an attack, and finally obtained permission to push on with his Virginians, while the main army should follow in the rear. He infused life and energy into the faltering soldiery, and was soon within sight of the fort, or of what had been the fort, for the French garrison, numbering scarcely five hundred, and meagerly supplied with provisions, had set the fort on fire at the approach of the English, and fled in terror down the Ohio. In honor of the statesman across the water through whose agency the fort had fallen, the post was called Pittsburg.

Hosted by Google

In scenes such as these were America's future heroes being educated Washington made good use of his opportunities, and carefully noted the failures and their causes, which attended the movements of the British generals. Warfare among the wilds of this continent differed materially from warfare in the Old World, and military tactics must be revised when the foe carried a tomahawk and was likely to spring into view in the most unexpected places. The arrogance of those who held royal commissions was painfully offensive. They refused counsel from the men who were familiar with the Indian paths and the savage character. They snubbed their equals in rank when the latter happened to be of the provincial service, and refused to obey their superiors. Washington, at the head of the Virginia forces, experienced so much embarrassment from repeated acts of this character, that the year before he had promptly determined to resign his commission, unless the difficulties were removed. It was for this purpose that he made his famous journey of five hundred miles to Boston on horseback, to confer with Lord Loudoun, then commander-in-chief. It was in winter-time, and he was absent from his post seven weeks. He spent ten days in Boston, and was treated with distinguished courtesy. He attended the meetings of the General Court, and listened to the discussions of military affairs. In the main object of his trip he was eminently successful. He stopped in New York both on his way to and from Boston, and was cordially entertained by Colonel Beverly Robinson, who had been his schoolmate and boyhood's friend in Virginia. This was when he was reputed to have fallen in love with Miss Mary Philipse.

1759. Jan. There was an election of a new Assembly in the beginning of the year 1759, De Lancey having dissolved (December 16, 1758) the one elected in 1752. Fifteen new members were chosen, the Livingston party being in the ascendant. Philip Livingston, who was one of the most popular of the aldermen, was elected by the city, also Oliver De Lancey, John Cruger, and Leonard Lispenard; William Livingston was sent to represent his brother's manor; Robert R. Livingston and Henry Livingston were sent from Duchess County; Philip Verplanck and Colonel Van Rensselaer were re-elected, and several others whose names have already become familiar to the reader. William Nicoll was chosen speaker. John Watts and William Walton had recently been elected to the Council.

Party spirit, however, wellnigh exhausted itself at the polls. When the Assembly was convened the wheels of government rolled smoothly. Both branches of the Legislature saw that their very existence was at stake, and that it would be folly to waste time and energy in party

Hosted by Google

wrangles. Abercrombie had been recalled, which was exceedingly gratifying. Sir Jeffrey Amherst had been appointed commander-in-chief of the king's forces in America, and he was believed to be specially fitted for the command. He was not a brilliant man, but America was tired of brilliant men, those who were continually devising fine plans and accomplishing nothing. He possessed sound judgment and marvelous energy. He was slow, but reliable whenever necessity arose for decisive action. He had a squarely rounded head, firmly set on a rather large neck, covered with short, crisp hair; his face was broad and bold; his eyes keen and always on the alert; his nose Grecian, prominent, and almost on a line with his slightly retreating and not very high forehead; his mouth firm, but pleasant; and his chin of the fighting mold. He inspired more confidence than any officer who had hitherto been sent into the country.

He heard of the disgraceful disaster attending Abercrombie while at Cape Breton in the summer, and without orders sailed at once for Boston, from which point he marched with four regiments to Lake George, to reinforce his superior. He was in New York when he received official news of his promotion. Secretary Pitt required an addition to the British army from the colonies, of twenty thousand men. The Assembly at once resolved to raise two thousand six hundred and eighty, as the quota of New York, offering to each a bounty of £15, with an additional sum of twenty shillings to the recruiting officer. The expenses were to be defrayed by the emission of £100,000 in bills of credit, to be sunk in nine years by a tax, beginning with £12,000, for the present year. Shortly afterward the Assembly, at the request of General Amherst, and upon his promise that it should be repaid in the course of a year, loaned the crown £150,000, in addition to the sums already voted for the expenses of the campaign.

In May, Amherst removed his headquarters to Albany, where twelve thousand provincials had already assembled. Sir William Johnson was soon on the war-path with seven hundred braves. The fall of Niagara swiftly followed, and the star of France in the western hemisphere was unquestionably on the wane. The praise of Sir William was upon all lips in both New York and England. The last remaining link in that chain of fortresses which united Canada with Louisiana was now broken.

Amherst, meanwhile, with over eleven thousand men, was approaching Ticonderoga. The French saw that resistance was hopeless, and, July 22. blowing up their works, withdrew to Crown Point. On the 4th Aug. 4. of August, Amherst embarked on the lake, and presently held possession of Crown Point, which the enemy abandoned at his approach.

Hosted by Google

Amherst expected, on the reduction of Crown Point, to co-operate with General Wolfe by advancing upon Montreal. But he must first remove the French, who were strongly intrenched at the foot of the lake, and possessed four large vessels heavily armed.

Wolfe, at Point Levi opposite Quebec, watched daily for the arrival of Amherst in vain. Red-hot shot from his cannon set the lower town in a blaze, but the citadel above was likely to remain unharmed. One or two rash attempts had been made to storm the works, and numbers of brave men had fallen. It was nearly the middle of September when it was determined to scale the heights back of Quebec, and thus draw the French into an engagement. Wolfe, who was something of a poet, sang a pensive song of his own composition at his mess the evening after the bold scheme had been decided upon, which ran thus: —

"Why, soldiers, why
Should we be melancholy, boys?
Why, soldiers, why?
Whose business 't is to die."

To mislead the enemy, Admiral Holmes was to ascend the river in the ships. The ruse was a success. Montcalm, supposing that the English were on the point of raising the siege, sent off three thousand men for the protection of Montreal. That same clear, calm evening Wolfe was quietly embarking his troops in transports preparatory to the assault. Two hours before daylight, thirty flat-boats, containing sixteen hundred soldiers, left the vessels and dropped silently down with the current, followed at a short distance by the rest of the troops.

The elements favored the weird enterprise. Heavy black clouds drifted over the sky, even the stars were hidden, and the darkness so dark as to be almost felt. The oars were muffled, and the roar of the river was the only sound which stirred the air. Wolfe was seated in the bow of one of the boats, with his arms folded and his head leaning upon his breast; all at once he repeated in whispered tones the lines from Gray's Elegy which end with:

"The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

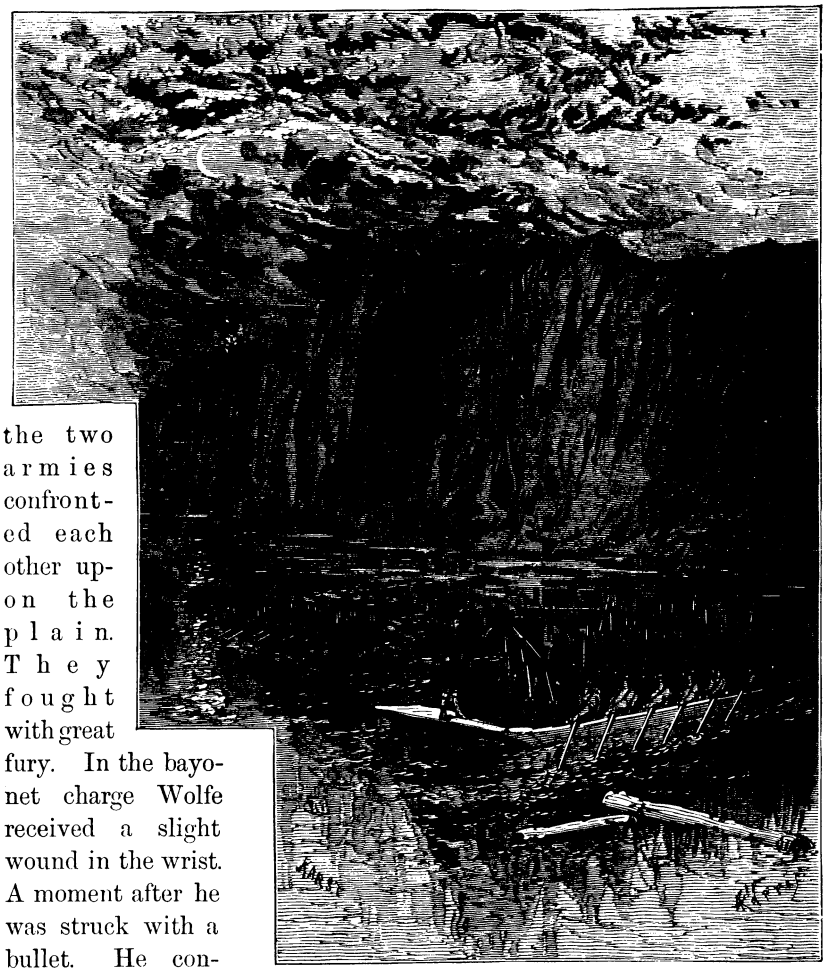
"Gentlemen," he added, softly, "I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec to-morrow."

The story is familiar to every American, how, in the early dawn of a brilliant morning, five thousand English troops stood drawn up in order of battle upon the Plains of Abraham, and of the astonishment of Montcalm, when swift messengers waked him from his slumbers with the

Hosted by Google

startling news. "Surely," he said, "it can be but a small party come to burn a few houses and retire!"

He was speedily aware of the magnitude of the danger. At ten o'clock the two armies confronted each other upon the plain. They fought with great fury. In the bayonet charge Wolfe received a slight wound in the wrist. A moment after he was struck with a bullet. He continued cheering on his men, until a third ball stretched him upon the ground. He was tenderly carried to the rear, and asked if he would have a surgeon, to which he replied in the negative. One of the officers who was supporting him exclaimed, at the same instant, "See how they run!" "Who run?" demanded Wolfe with energy. "The enemy, sir; they give way everywhere." "Then tell Colonel Burton to march Webb's regiment down to Charles River, to cut



The Assault upon Quebec.

Hosted by Google

off their retreat from the bridge. Now, God be praised, I will die in peace." And, turning upon his side, the spirit of the brave commander took its final departure.

Montcalm received his death-wound almost simultaneously with that of Wolfe. He was borne to the hospital, and gently told that he must die. "I am glad of it," he replied. When he learned that his life could not last over ten or twelve hours, he exclaimed, "So much the better; I am happy that I shall not see the surrender of Quebec." And he did not. When, at the earnest solicitation of the citizens, the white flag was hoisted, Montcalm was no more.

The news of the capture of Quebec was hailed with rapture in New York. There was no longer any question concerning the subjugation of the French in every part of Canada. The war was drawing to a close. The bells of the city rang in one grand, riotous tumult of joy, and bonfires and illuminations turned the night into a scene long to be remembered. But the gladness was saddened by the loss of the gallant Wolfe. And there were mourning hearts in many a household, for numbers of New York's noble sons had shared the glory, and were now sleeping in the soldier's grave. In England a day was set apart for public thanksgiving; and Parliament commemorated the services of Wolfe, in overcoming almost insurmountable natural obstacles to overthrow Montcalm, by a monument in Westminster Abbey. An obelisk was also erected to his memory in New York, just east of the country-seat of Oliver De Lancey on the Hudson.

Following shortly came the news of the rout of the French army at Minden, and the defeat of the French fleet off the coast of Algava. There was abundant cause for gratitude. And yet there was much more to be done ere the frontiers were safe; the army must be supported, and the public needs supplied.

In the early spring Boston suffered from a terrible fire, by which more
1760. than two hundred families were deprived of shelter, and left in a
March 20. destitute condition. An appeal was made to New York for aid. With generous impulse, notwithstanding the low condition of the treasury, and the indebtedness to a long list of creditors through the extraordinary demands of the war, £2,500 were at once voted by the Assembly for the relief of the distressed city.

When the British army returned to New York from Canada, it met with a triumphal reception. No American province had suffered as much from the incursions of the French, and consequently in no other capital were the demonstrations of joy at being relieved from the horrible terrors of savage warfare more solid and sincere. Sumptuous entertainments were given to the officers, which they regarded with amazement. New York seemed to have grown rich during the war, notwithstanding her outlays.

Hosted by Google

That privateering had proved a paying business, is shown by the list of vessels published from time to time in the newspapers of the period. The number of prizes brought into port during the first few months of the war were reported as including "thirty ships, four brigantines, eight scows, one barque, and several schooners and sloops"; and during the same period, the New York privateersmen took twenty-six other prizes into British West India ports. Enticing advertisements were constantly appearing, such as, "All gentlemen, sailors, and others, who have a mind to make their fortunes, are desired to repair on board —— ship, which, mounting twenty-six guns, and carrying two hundred men, will be ready to sail in three weeks," — to intercept certain French fleets. The whole American coast from Maine to Georgia swarmed with daring, adventurous, and probably unscrupulous privateers, who preyed upon the commerce of more than one of the European nations. French ships, filled with the spices and coffee of their Indian provinces, and cargoes of West India sugars and rum, were sought with the more zeal; but rich Spanish galleons, laden with the wealth of Mexico and Peru, were not passed by in respectful silence. Private cruises were the fashion. Long experience in trading upon the coast of Africa made the merchants fearless and self-reliant. The age was agog with the spirit of financial adventure, and it is no matter of wonder that opportunities such as these, which were sustained by the highest authority, as well as precedent, were promptly seized and turned to account.

There were many large importing merchants in New York at this date, notable among whom were Isaac and Nicholas Gouverneur, Robert Murray, Walter and Samuel Franklin, John and Henry Cruger, the Livingstons, the Beekmans, Lott & Low, Philip Cuyler, Anthony Van Dam, Hugh and Alexander Wallace, Leonard and Anthony Lispenard, Theophylact Bache, and William Walton.

William Walton was one of those who *fêted* the victorious officers. He was a very rich as well as a very hospitable man, and his expensive banquets were afterwards prolific subjects for criticism in England. His table was spread with the choicest viands, and "groaned under its weight of brilliant massive silver," while a forest of decanters graced the sideboard, and costly wines flowed free and fast.

He had recently (in 1752) built what is now known as the "Old Walton House," in Franklin Square, then the continuation of Queen Street. It was the most costly private residence which had been attempted on this continent. It was English in design; and it was as far as practicable an improvement upon all previous architecture. Its walls were as substantial as many modern churches. Its bricks, brown-stone water-

Hosted by Google

tables, lintels, jambs, and decorations were all imported, as also its expensive furniture, which was in keeping with the style of the structure. The superb staircase in its ample hall, with mahogany hand-rails and bannisters, by age as dark as ebony, was fit for any nobleman's palace. It had a broad portico upheld by fluted columns, and surmounted by armorial bearings; and quaint heads cut from the freestone looked down



Walton House in 1760.

upon the street from between the windows. The grounds extended to the water, and were laid out and cultivated with fastidious care.

William Walton had acquired his fortune in part through an advantageous contract with some Spaniards at St. Augustine. He was the son of Captain William Walton, who was an enterprising builder of vessels, as well as a shipper of goods; and who appears also to have sailed his own vessels on trading voyages to the West Indies and to the Spanish Main.

He married (January 27, 1731) Cornelia, daughter of Dr. William Beekman and Catharine Peters de la Noy. His brother Jacob had, five years prior to this date, married Maria, the sister of Dr. William Beekman, and daughter of Gerard Beekman and Magdalen Abeel. The two brothers were in partnership until the death of Jacob, in 1749. A son

Hosted by Google

of the latter, whose name was William, became the favorite and heir of the uncle. It was he, the younger William Walton, who in 1757, married the daughter of Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey, a lady whose fortune was equal to his own, and whose tastes were in the direction of the same princely style of living which rendered the walls of the old edifice famous.

William Walton (the elder) was genial, full of brilliancy, and a master of the arts of politeness. Dinners were his hobby, and he gathered about his table from time to time such of the celebrities of the Old World as, officially or in the pursuit of pleasure, visited the New. He was regarded as the first merchant of his time, and as a prominent legislator and an honored counselor, held an enviable political position. He died childless in 1768.

William Walton (the younger) was one of the most distinguished young men of his time. His alliance with one of the highest and proudest of the aristocratic families of New York, brought him early and conspicuously into notice. After the death of his uncle he associated himself in business with his brother Jacob, who had married a daughter of Hon. Henry Cruger, and the firm was known as that of William and Jacob Walton & Co. They owned large tracts of land in the northern part of the State and elsewhere. William Walton was one of the founders of the Chamber of Commerce, in 1768; was its treasurer in 1771, its vice-president in 1772, and its president from 1774 to 1775. He was one of the first petitioners for the Marine Society, incorporated in 1770, the object of which was to assist the widows and children of masters of vessels. He was one of the foremost in sustaining the measures adopted by the merchants to resist the Stamp Act. He was one of the Committee of Correspondence of fifty-one, chosen in May, 1774, when the citizens learned of the closing of the Port of Boston; from the special recommendations of this committee sprung the First Continental Congress of 1774. He was one of the committee of sixty, chosen to carry out the non-importation and non-exportation ordinance adopted by that Congress. And he was one of the Committee of Safety of one hundred, chosen in May, 1775.

In the final contest his family connections were divided, and he desired to take a neutral part. He retired to his country residence in New Jersey, but he was too marked a man to be left in peace, and was compelled to return to the city when it was occupied by the British. Hence his New Jersey estates were confiscated. He remained in New York during the war, and devoted large sums of money to the relief of the destitute. He was one of the vestry named by Governor Robertson, December 29, 1779, to look after such, and it was gratefully recorded of him that he

Hosted by Google

was unceasing in his efforts to soften the miseries of the confinement to which the American prisoners were subjected. He was one of the merchants who resumed the meetings of the Chamber of Commerce, June 21, 1779, and was again chosen vice-president in 1783.[1]

When Parliament manifested its disposition to tax the colonies in order to refund the debt incurred by the French war, poverty was pleaded as an objection. The lords sitting about the king's table laughed at the plea, and indulged in graphic accounts of the prodigal entertainments given in New York to the officers of the British army, making special mention of the display of silver plate at Walton's dinners, which they said was equal if not superior to any nobleman's. Such exhibitions indicated enormous riches. It was absurd for the colonists to waste their substance in mad extravagance; there was wealth sufficient in New York alone to pay the whole debt of England. Thus they discussed the question over their wine, and thus they argued the next day in Parliament. There was force in the logic, hence the long train of consequences.

On the thirtieth day of July, New York was startled by the very sudden and unexpected death of Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey. He had dined and spent the evening before very agreeably with Ex-Governor Robert Hunter Morris, William Walton, John Watts, and several other distinguished gentlemen, on Staten Island. He returned, and drove to his beautiful country-seat in the suburbs (just above Canal Street) about ten o'clock. He was, to all outward appearances, in ordinary health. He rose in the morning as usual. But about nine o'clock his little daughter found him reclining in his easy-chair in the library in a dying condition, too far gone for medical aid to be of any avail, his death having been occasioned by an affection of the heart. Friends were summoned. John Watts, and other gentlemen, mounted their horses and hurried to his side, but the life which had so long received the love and homage of the people had departed. The courtly home was full of sorrow, and the city grieved as it rarely ever was known to grieve for the loss of a public character. No American ever exerted a wider or more wholesome influence than De Lancey. No ruler of New York ever possessed to such a degree the elements of popularity. And no chief justice of the

1760. **July 30.**

[1] William Walton died August 18, 1796, aged sixty-five. (His wife, Mary De Lancey, died in 1767.) He left three sons, William, James De Lancey, and Jacob; the latter entered the British navy, and rose to the rank of rear-admiral. He had one daughter, Ann, who married Daniel Crommelin Verplanck. The Walton name is now continued by the Rev. William Walton, a son of the admiral. *Historical and Biographical Sketches, in Chamber of Commerce Records.* By John Austin Stevens.

Hosted by Google

province ever gave such universal satisfaction in his decisions. His political opponents were many, and often atrociously malicious, but they never attempted to deny his genius or his marvelous abilities.

The funeral was conducted with great pomp. Minute-guns from vessels in the harbor gave the signal, at 6.45 P. M., for the procession to move from the country-seat of the deceased; and at the same moment minute-guns from Copsey Battery spoke out with solemn distinctnesss the years (fifty-seven) of the life which had passed away. The Battery was followed by the man-of-war *Winchester*, and the *General Wall Packet*, successively, each firing fifty-seven guns, as the sad column of over half a mile in length, proceeded towards Trinity Church. The order of procession was as follows: —

1. The clerks of Trinity Church and St. George's Chapel in an open chaise.
2. The Rector of Trinity Church in a chaise.
3. The clergy of the several Protestant denominations of the city, two by two, in chaises.
4. An open hearse, bearing the coffin, covered with black velvet, richly adorned with gilt escutcheons. The hearse was drawn by a beautiful pair of white horses belonging to the illustrious departed, in mourning, and driven by his own coachman.
5. The counselors in mourning coaches, as pall-bearers.
6. The family and relatives in mourning coaches.
7. The members of the Assembly in coaches.
8. The mayor and aldermen of the city, two by two, in coaches and chaises.
9. The lawyers of the city, two by two, in coaches and chaises.

The procession paused opposite the house of Edward Willett, on Broadway, and the coffin was placed upon men's shoulders; the members of the Council came from their coaches and supported the pall. The mourners alighted, as also the long train of attendants and friends, and, walking in the order of rank, entered Trinity Church, which was brilliantly illuminated. Rev. Mr. Barclay conducted the funeral services, at the conclusion of which the remains were interred in the middle aisle, a few yards from the altar.[1]

De Lancey was the fourth and last native New-Yorker who administered the affairs of the colony under the crown. He had corresponded personally as well as officially with the English statesmen during the critical period of the war with France, and his opinions had been carefully noted, and often quoted, at the Court of St. James. His death was deeply lamented there as well as in New York. It was spoken of as an irretrievable loss. His sister, Lady Warren, went immediately to Secretary Pitt, and asked

[1] *The New York Mercury*, Monday, August 4, 1760.

Hosted by Google

that her younger brother, Oliver De Lancey, might be appointed to the vacant office. The minister received the application coldly. "I hope, Mr. Pitt," she exclaimed with warmth, "that you have had reason to be satisfied with the brother I have lost?"

"Madam," was the answer, "had your brother James lived in England, he would have been one of the first men in the kingdom."[1]

The government of New York devolved upon Dr. Colden, as the senior counselor, until the wishes of the Ministry could be ascertained, who immediately came from his rural retreat where he had been for the past few years devoting himself to scientific and literary pursuits, and at the age of seventy-three, took his seat in the chair of state.

Although the war had been nominally brought to a close by the reduction of Canada, yet the French with malicious intent continued to generate jealousies and hate among the Indians towards the English. And the conduct of adventurers and traders of desperate fortunes, who were rushing like a flock of harpies into the western wilds, was equally ill-fated in results. The savages considered themselves, and doubtless were, cheated and abused. No treaty having been made or presents sent them, a feeling of hostility grew, which every now and then broke forth in some shocking massacre. There was no peace on the western borders. An enterprising trader who penetrated the wilderness of Michigan as far as Michilimackinac, at the peril of his life, was waited upon by a Chippewa chief, who complained bitterly of the treatment his tribe had received from the English. He said:—

"Englishmen! Although you have conquered the French, you have not yet conquered us! We are not your slaves! These lakes, these woods, these mountains, were left to us by our ancestors. They are our inheritance, and we will part with them to none. Your nation supposes that we, like the white people, cannot live without bread and pork and beef. But you ought to know that He, the Great Spirit and Master of Life, has provided food for us upon these broad lakes and in these mountains."

[1] This remark was mentioned by Lady Warren to the lieutenant-governor's younger son, John Peter De Lancey (who was educated at Harrow, and the military school of Greenwich, in England), by whom the anecdote was related to his son, Bishop De Lancey, and to his son-in-law, J. Fennimore Cooper. The great fault of Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey's character was indolence. He read, but did not like to write. He loved his ease rather than money. One of the sources of profit to the colonial government was the fees payable upon the signing of land-patents. At his death it is said that so many of these patents awaited his approval that the signing them gave a large sum at once to his successor, Cadwallader Colden. *Memoir of the Honorable James De Lancey.* By Edward F. De Lancey. *Doc. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IV. 1037–59.

Hosted by Google

When it was rumored that Wyoming was being settled by people from Connecticut, the Indians claimed that their right to the property in that valley had never been relinquished, and that the settlement was in the very spot selected by the Six Nations for the residue of the Delawares, and other tribes, who were obliged to remove from the inner country on account of the increase of their people and the scarcity of hunting. Governor Hamilton of Pennsylvania was very much afraid it would occasion a fresh rupture, and wrote to General Amherst asking his interposition. The massacre of Wyoming did not occur until 1778, but the settlement from its first inception was regarded with unappeasable rancor; and revenge upon it was a cherished luxury in the hearts of the infuriated savages.

The Mohawks had their own peculiar wrongs to settle with the land speculators from Albany and Schenectady, whose frauds were remembered with an intensity increased by long meditation upon the subject. And a thousand other causes of irritation were keeping the whole savage atmosphere in a tumult.

Sir William Johnson, at the request of General Amherst, visited Detroit in the early summer of 1761, to consolidate a treaty if possible, regulate the fur-trade, and learn what the French were about in that region. It was a perilous journey, as we may well suppose. He was accompanied by his son, John Johnson, and by his nephew — afterwards his son-in-law — Guy Johnson, who acted as his private secretary, and by a large body of servants and military attendants. At Oswego, and other points on the route, they tarried to distribute presents, and in some instances to give silver medals, sent by Amherst as a reward for good conduct. Complaints were everywhere poured into his ears about the haste with which the English were grasping lands, and he found that his journey had not been undertaken a moment too soon. A general rising up of the Indians throughout the whole western world had been skillfully planned, and the garrison and settlers were all to have been tomahawked and scalped. The arts by which Sir William had so long influenced the savage were never more successful than in this instance. His gilded trappings and pompous ceremonials were extremely fascinating to the red man's eye. An Eastern prince could hardly have moved through the country with more show and circumstance. On one occasion some deputations from the different tribes waited upon him bringing presents of maize. He reciprocated promptly with Indian pipes and tobacco, and then ordered a barbecue of an immense ox roasted whole. While waiting to arrange preliminaries for the conference at Detroit, the evenings were devoted to dances. The French officers and their families participated,

Hosted by Google

as well as Sir William and his private retinue. They would assemble about eight o'clock and dance until five the next morning.

The council opened on the 9th of August, the firing of two cannon being the signal which called the Indians together. Seats were prepared in the open air. The number of tribes represented was much larger than had been anticipated. They came from beyond Lake Superior, and from every point of the compass. They wanted to see with their own eyes the Grand Mogul, whose house was the "fireplace" of the dreaded Iroquois. When the assemblage was quietly seated, he appeared with his officers, all in gorgeous uniform, walked majestically to his place, and, amid profound silence, delivered his speech with that dignity of mien always enticing to an Indian. Several days were occupied. Every nation had some favor to ask of Sir William. The final result was an apparently amicable understanding, and it was believed if the directions given to the officers of the garrison were strictly obeyed, and no further provocations given to the Indians, they would not break the peace. Before Sir William started on his homeward journey, he gave a grand dinner to the people of Detroit, and closed the gala entertainment with a ball in honor of the wives and daughters of the officers. He halted on his return at Sandusky, to examine the proposed site for a blockhouse. At Niagara he was detained several days by illness. He reached Fort Johnson on the last day of October.

Nor was it all peace in and about New York City. No little bitterness had been engendered by the system of impressemnt. The captains of British men-of-war claimed the right to board colonial vessels and take thence any number of men required to fill their quota; or, failing to do this, they hesitated not to land and kidnap citizens for the service of the British navy. In August, 1760, a New York merchant-vessel arrived from Lisbon, and a man-of-war lying in the harbor immediately sent a boat to board her and demand some of her men. The crew seized their own captain and officers and confined them below, and then refused to admit the intruders. The captain informed them through the cabin window that he and his officers were prisoners and consequently unable to obey orders, but they opened fire upon the unoffending merchantman, killing one man, and wounding others. This was only one of many outrages, which stirred the indignation of merchants and traders, until forbearance almost ceased to be a virtue.

And presently Dr. Colden was instrumental in an act which set not only the Assembly but the whole city and province of New York in a blaze. By the death of De Lancey the seat of chief justice was vacant, and a general wish was expressed that it should be at once filled. Colden was urged to

Hosted by Google

appoint a successor without delay. Instead, he wrote to Halifax, asking him to nominate a chief justice. The result was the appointment of Benjamin Pratt, a Boston lawyer, not, as hitherto, "during good behavior," but "at the pleasure of the king." Judges Chambers, Horsemanden, and Jones refused to act longer unless they could hold their commissions during good behavior. Vigorous thinkers and writers protested loudly against this attempt to render the judiciary dependent upon the crown. Conspicuous among these were William Livingston, John Morin Scott, and William Smith. Massachusetts was at the same moment writhing under the "writs of assistance," which the Ministry had recklessly determined to inflict upon the colonies. These writs were in effect search-warrants, designed to enable custom-house officers to break open with impunity any person's house for the enforcement of the revenue. The fearless and impulsive James Otis had resigned his office of advocate-general, that untrammelled he might argue this case against the crown. He pronounced it the worst feature of arbitrary power, and his eloquence so stimulated the indignation of the people of Boston, that, when the writs were granted, the custom-house officers dared not in a single instance carry them into execution. Still less were the people of New York in humor for further encroachment upon their sacred liberties. The blow at the judiciary seemed to be the precursor of trouble indeed. Chief Justice Pratt was treated with indignity for accepting an office on such terms. Colden, for the part he had taken, lost many of his warmest friends. The Assembly, in answer to the request of Colden that the salary of the chief justice might be increased, resolved, "that, as the salaries usually allowed the judges of the Supreme Court, have been and still appear to be sufficient to engage gentlemen of the first figure, both as to capacity and fortune, in this colony, to accept of these offices, it would be highly improper to augment the salary of chief justice on this occasion"; and the outraged and obstinate body actually went on to say they would not allow any salaries, unless the commissions of the chief justice and the other judges were granted during good behavior. Dec. 17.

The Lords of Trade were amazed when they heard of this "undutiful and indecent opposition to his Majesty's just rights and authority." They reprimanded the judges, who had in some degree countenanced the measure, and recommended temporary salaries from the quit-rents,[1] — which would be even more advantageous towards securing the dependence of the colony upon the crown, and its commerce to the mother country. It was further hinted that the latter course would insure

[1] *Lords of Trade to Lieutenant-Governor Colden*, June 11, 1762. *New York Coll. MSS.*, VII. 503, 504.

Hosted by Google

judgments in favor of the crown, against the great landed proprietors of New York, and serve to balance their power in the Assembly.

Major-General Monckton[1] had been commissioned governor of New York shortly after Colden received the appointment of lieutenant-governor (April 28, 1761), and in his forty-sixth instruction had been directed to annul, by every legitimate method, all "exorbitant, irregular, and unconditional grants of land." The Lords of Trade were of the opinion, and wrote the same to Colden, that the lieutenant-governor and Council of New York and prominent members of the Assembly were in league respecting measures for landed grants and settlements, which were for the good of themselves and families rather than the subject in general. Colden resented the imputation. He said he had never while in the government been interested in any purchase, or in any share or part of any purchase, of land from the Indians, either great or small. As to his children they were of full age and maturity, and not under his direction; there was no reason to debar them from any privilege or benefit which was accorded to other of the king's subjects in the province, but at the same time he denied their having been concerned in any purchase of the kind since he was honored with the administration of the government. But he went on to explain how difficult it was for men of small means to improve land in the woods. In the first place, it was necessary to call a whole tribe together in order to buy a farm, whatever its size, and there must be several conferences, attended with great expense. Then it would be full three years before the land could be cleared and rendered self-supporting. The settlers were a great distance from the market, and there were numberless reasons why it was desirable for men of fortune to become enlisted in the purchases, and advance money for improvements, etc. He knew of only two of the acting counselors who had interested themselves in this manner, one of whom was Sir William Johnson. He

[1] Governor Monckton received his commission October 20, 1761, and was sworn into office with the usual ceremonies October 26. He, however, had received the king's permission to leave the province, and entered into nothing more than the necessary forms of government. He sailed from New York on the last day of November, in command of an expedition against the French and Spanish possessions in the West Indies; for while England was rejoicing in the near prospect of peace, Spain had formed a secret alliance with France and declared war. Seventeen hundred and eighty-seven of his troops were native New-Yorkers, and among his officers were, General Lyman, the second in command at Lake George in 1755; the afterwards distinguished General Gates, who captured Burgoyne; and Richard Montgomery, the hero of Quebec, a few years later. Monckton, in a letter to the Lords of Trade, November 10, 1761, acknowledging the receipt of his commission, said that Hon. Archibald Kennedy wished to retire from the Council on account of his advanced age, and that he might better attend to his office of collector of the customs, and Joseph Reade, "a gentleman of fortune and every way qualified for the trust," was recommended to fill the vacancy.

Hosted by Google

said that in his travels through the Mohawk country in the execution of the office of surveyor-general, distinguished Indians had talked with him often, and discoursed with much vehemence about cheats in their land-trades; but he suspected that the interpreters did not always fairly represent what the Indians said, and the Indians seemed to entertain similar suspicions, for they expressed by signs many times their earnest wish that they might understand the English language. All that he could learn with certainty was, that some persons had fraudulently obtained a conveyance from them, but he never could ascertain who the persons were, probably from the unwillingness of the interpreters to have the fraud discovered. Should the instructions be carried into execution, there was no predicting the calamities which might follow. Many of the patentees were men of wealth and influence, and would resort to extreme methods to circumvent the power of the governor. The boundaries of estates were indefinite, from whence arose great trouble; the running of intelligible lines by the king's surveyor-general seemed to be the first necessary step towards the settlement of difficulties.

George II., the aged King of England, had died suddenly of apoplexy, on the morning of October 25, 1760; his grandson, then twenty-two years of age, while riding with the Earl of Bute, was overtaken with a secret message announcing the interesting intelligence that he was sovereign of the realm. The young man manifested neither emotion nor surprise, but, as an excuse for turning back, he said his horse was lame. To the groom at Kew, he remarked, "I have said my horse was lame; I forbid you to say to the contrary," and he went directly to Carlton House, the residence of his mother.[1]

The changes in the Ministry which followed bore heavily upon the colonies. To place himself above aristocratic dictation, and dictation of any sort whatever, was the ruling passion of George III. The Earl of Bute, who was noted neither for vigor of understanding or energy of character, and who was without experience, political connections, or powerful family friendships, was his confidential companion. The young king was daring and self-willed. Bute was timid, aspiring, ignorant of men, ignorant of business, and obsequious.

Negotiations for a general peace progressed slowly. Choiseul, in the judgment of Pitt, was the greatest minister France had seen since the days of Richelieu. In depth, refinement, and quick perceptions he had no superior. But he was an agitator, lively, and indiscreet, often discussing the gravest questions of state in jest. Pitt was always stately, and his nature was hard and unaccommodating. He wanted to impress

[1] *Walpole's George III.*, I. 6.

Hosted by Google

the superiority of England upon the treaty of peace. The object of the war had been accomplished, but he delayed reconciliation for the purpose of making more extended acquisitions; the fleet had sailed for the West Indies, and the chances of conquest were too great to be sacrificed.

George III. mourned over the war, and asked his lords why it was being continued for no definite purpose whatever. Newcastle and others intrigued against and were determined to thwart the policy of Pitt. Choiseul covenanted with Spain to stand towards all foreign powers as one state, which was the basis of the famous treaty that secured to America in advance, aid from the superstitious, kind-hearted, and equitable Charles III. of Spain. George III. was married, on the eighth day of September, 1761, to the not very lovely German princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, a girl of seventeen, who was afterwards the well-known and correct Queen Charlotte. Five days later propositions came from France, which Pitt received with scornful irony. The negotiations were broken off. Thus war with Spain must be accepted. Pitt submitted to the cabinet his written advice to recall Lord Bristol, the British ambassador, from Madrid. The Earl of Bute, speaking the opinion of the king, opposed the project as rash and ill-advised. Newcastle and all the great Whig lords objected, until Pitt, standing with his brother-in-law, Temple, alone, defeated, haughtily declared that he would not remain in a situation which made him responsible for measures he was no longer able to guide.

On Monday, October 5, William Pitt, the greatest minister of his century, among orators the only peer of Demosthenes, and who, finding England in disgrace, had conquered Canada, the Ohio Valley, and Guadaloupe, sustained Russia from annihilation, humbled France, gained dominion over the seas, won supremacy in Hindostan, and whose august presence at home had overawed even majesty itself, stood in the presence of the youthful king and resigned the seals of power. Little did he foresee how effectually he had destroyed the balance of the European colonial system, and confirmed the implacable hostility of France and Spain to such a degree, as to leave England without a friend in its coming contest with America.

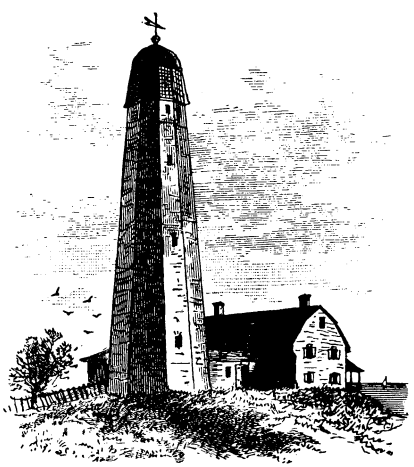
The consummation of peace languished and was delayed. Bute became First Lord of the Treasury. He favored American taxation by act of Parliament, and expressed his extreme delight when the measure of subjecting the halls of justice to the prerogative was adopted. "We shall have much less difficulty in making the colonies dance to the tune of obedience than the croakers pretend," said the self-satisfied monarch of three-and-twenty to Bute, as he laughed over the probable increase of the nation's funds.

Hosted by Google

The death of the king dissolved the New York Assembly, and writs were issued for a new election returnable on the 3d of March, 1761. Seven new members only were chosen. The Livingston party was strong, but the De Lancey party hoped much from the superior address of John Watts, who was at all times very near the lieutenant-governor, and it was surmised that the latter, on account of his advanced years, might possibly yield to a leader.

The mayor and aldermen of the city were seriously agitated over a theater which was opened, under countenance of Colden, on Beekman Street about this time. The mayor introduced the subject into the Assembly, and tried to obtain the passage of a law prohibiting all dramatic performances within the city limits. Not succeeding in this, attention was turned towards the suppression of lotteries, which had become singularly common. But although a bill was passed subjecting all games of chance to a penalty of £ 3 (half to go the church wardens and half to the informer), the lottery fever prevailed for many subsequent years.

On the 8th of May the House passed the following: "An Act for raising a sum not exceeding three thousand pounds by way of a lot- **1762.** tery for building a lighthouse." The merchants had petitioned the **May 8.** lieutenant-governor for a lighthouse at Sandy Hook, and Colden strongly recommended the enterprise in his message to the Assembly in April, 1761. Thus originated the Sandy Hook Lighthouse, which was first illuminated, for the benefit of mariners, in May, 1763.



Sandy Hook Lighthouse.

Shortly after a bill passed the House for a lottery to raise funds to complete the new jail. The corporation about the same time introduced lamps upon public lamp-posts, to supersede suspended lanterns, which had hitherto been the only mode of lighting the city. Fulton — then known as Partition Street — had long had a partial existence, but, simultaneously with the introduction of street lamps, it was paved, as was also Frankfort Street. A variety of municipal ordinances marked this year, some regulating weights and measures, and others the markets, docks, etc. The modes of punishment inflicted upon

Hosted by Google

criminals arrest the eye with wonder as we turn over the records. One instance must suffice: —

"On Thursday, the 20th instant, between the hours of nine and eleven, Mrs. Johanna Christiana Young and another lady, her associate from Philadelphia, being found guilty of grand larceny last week, at the mayor's court, are to be set on two chairs exalted on a cart, with their heads and faces uncovered, and to be carted from the City Hall to that part of Broadway near the old English Church, from thence down Maiden Lane, then down the Fly to the White Hall, thence to the church aforesaid, and then to the whipping-post, where each of them are to receive *thirty-nine* lashes, to remain in jail for one week, and then to depart the city."

King's College was yet in its infancy. The excellent Rev. Dr. Samuel Johnson wrote to Archbishop Secker, under date of April 10, 1762, that besides attending to his regular business of overseeing and governing the college, reading prayers, moderating disputations, prescribing exercises, holding commencements, and giving degrees, he was obliged to act as tutor to one and often two classes. He was pleased with the prospect of release from the drudgery of tuition through the appointment of a vice-president, who would be expected to live in a collegiate way at the common table (the expense being "six shillings per week for mere board"), but he regretted that Myles Cooper, who had been named for the position, and who might otherwise suit very well, was not a little older. He requested that royal instructions might be given to the New York governors never to grant patents for townships, villages, or manors without obliging the patentees to sequestrate a competent portion for the support of religion and education. He said that Dr. Jay, "an ingenious young physician," was going to England on business of his own, and would be employed to solicit contributions for the college.

Dr. James Jay, afterwards Sir James Jay, Knight, was at this time thirty years of age. He was one of the elder brothers of Hon. John Jay. It was while on his visit to England as agent for the college that he received the honor of Knighthood. He became involved in a suit in Chancery arising out of the collections for the college, but returned to New York prior to the Revolution.[1] He was the fourth son of Peter Jay and Mary Van Cortlandt (the daughter of Jacobus Van Cortlandt and Eve Philipse), and the grandson of Augustus Jay and Ann Maria Bayard (daughter of Balthazar Bayard and Maria Loockermans). The Jay family were among those who were driven from France through the troubles and violences connected with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Pierre Jay, the father of Augustus, was a wealthy merchant, owning

[1] He died October 20, 1815.

Hosted by Google

vessels engaged in Spanish commerce. Upon one of these (laden with iron) he effected his escape, having found means of withdrawing his family secretly from his house, who, taking with them only a few arti-



Van Cortlandt Mansion at Kingsbridge built in 1748.

cles of value, succeeded in reaching England. Augustus was at the time with one of his father's ships trading upon the coast of Africa, and returned to France without knowing of the troubles and flight of the family. He escaped to America, and took up his abode in New Rochelle; afterwards (in 1697) marrying into the Bayard family as above. He was a successful merchant to the end of a long life. He died in New York in 1751. Peter Jay (born in 1704) was sent to England to be educated, and placed in the counting-house of his uncle, Mr. Peloquin of Bristol. He returned to New York, and was married in 1728; he also was a merchant; he declined to participate in the political and other disturbances of the colony, and having acquired a competence retired from business before he was forty years old. He settled upon an estate in Rye, a few miles from New Rochelle; he had ten children, two of whom were blind, caused by the small-pox in infancy, and with the assistance of his cultivated wife, devoted his remaining years to their education and happiness. John, the eighth son, was named for Judge John Chambers, whose wife was a sister of Mrs. Jay.[1] He was now one of the students in the college, having entered in 1760, at the age of fourteen.

[1] Mrs. Abraham De Peyster, the wife of the treasurer (it will be remembered), was a sister of Mrs. Peter Jay and Mrs. Judge John Chambers.

Hosted by Google

Before the end of 1762, Havana, then as now the chief place in the West Indies, with a harbor large enough to shelter all the navies of Europe, had been captured, and George III. had offered to return it to Spain in exchange for the Floridas or Porto Rico. France was humiliated, but, yielding to necessity, the preliminaries of peace, so momentous for America, were signed between France and Spain on the one side, and England and Portugal on the other; but it was not until February 10, 1763, that a formal treaty was ratified at Paris.

1763. Feb. 10.

"What can we do?" said Choiseul, who in his despair had for a time resigned the foreign department to the Duke de Praslin. "The English are furiously imperious; they are drunk with success; and, unfortunately we are not in a condition to abase their pride."

The English, indeed, assumed a very different position from that taken at Aix-la-Chapelle. It had been discovered, at a fearful cost of blood and treasure, that there was no safety along the American frontiers while Canada remained under French dominion. Hence the terms of the treaty were that the whole of Canada should be ceded to England; also Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, and its dependent islands, and the fisheries, except a share in them, and the two islets, St. Pierre and Miquelon, as a shelter for the French fishermen. And it was expressly agreed that the boundary between the French and English possessions should forever be settled by a "line drawn along the middle of the Mississippi, from its source as far as the river Iberville, and thence by a line drawn along the middle of this latter river, and of the lakes Maurepas and Ponchartrain to the sea." France on the same day indemnified Spain for the loss of Florida, by ceding to that power New Orleans and all Louisiana west of the Mississippi, — boundaries undefined.

England acquired Senegal in Africa, with the command of the slave-trade. France recovered in a dismantled and ruined state the little she possessed on January 1, 1759, in the East Indies. In Europe each power took back its own; Minorca, therefore, reverted to Great Britain.

"England," said the king, "never signed such a peace before, nor, I believe, any other power in Europe."

"The country," said the dying Granville, "never saw so glorious a war, nor so honorable a peace."

"Now," said the princess dowager, "my son is indeed king of England."

"I wish," said the Earl of Bute, "no better inscription on my tomb than that I was its author."

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXIX.

1763-1770.

FORESHADOWING OF THE REVOLUTION.

OPINIONS OF FRENCH STATESMEN. — BOUNDARY DISPUTES. — HON. JAMES DUANE. — INDIANS ON THE WAR PATH. — ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE DUTCH CHURCH. — THE MIDDLE DUTCH CHURCH. — THE GERMAN REFORMED CHURCH. — THE NEW JERSEY LAWYERS. — LORD GRENVILLE. — STAMPED PAPER. — NEW YORK IMPATIENT OF CONTROL. — FIRST COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE. — LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR COLDEN. — RIGHT OF APPEALS. — BARRÉ SPEECH. — PASSAGE OF THE STAMP ACT. — SONS OF LIBERTY. — REV. STEPHEN JOHNSON. — RESIGNATION OF STAMP OFFICERS. — THE STAMP ACT CONGRESS. — ARRIVAL OF STAMPS. — THE NON-IMPORTATION AGREEMENT. — STAMP ACT RIOT. — VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE. — SIR HENRY MOORE. — DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT. — REPEAL OF THE STAMP ACT. — NEW YORK DENOUNCED AS REBELLIOUS. — NEW YORK DISFRANCHISED. — BOSTON IN TROUBLE. — THE FOUNDING OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. — REPEALS. — TAX CONTINUED ON TEA. — DEATH OF SIR HENRY MOORE. — EMISSIONS OF BILLS OF CREDIT. — VIOLENT EXCITEMENT.

"THE consequences of the entire cession of Canada are obvious. England will erelong repent of having removed the only check that could keep her colonies in awe; they stand no longer in need of her protection; she will call on them to contribute towards supporting the burdens they have helped to bring on her; and they will answer by striking off all dependence," said the sagacious and experienced Vergennes, the French ambassador at Constantinople, when he heard of the conditions of the peace.

"We have caught them at last," said Choiseul to those about him when Louisiana was surrendered, and turned over immediately to Spain. His eager hopes anticipated the speedy struggle of America for a separate existence.

During the negotiations for peace, the kinsman and bosom-friend of Edmund Burke had employed the British press to unfold the danger to the nation of retaining Canada; and the French minister for foreign affairs frankly warned his adversaries, that the cession of Canada would lead to the independence of North America.[1]

[1] *Hans Stanley to William Pitt, 1760,* printed in Thackeray's Chatham.

Hosted by Google

The war was closed; but a standing army of twenty battalions was to be kept up in America, and as the new Ministry were harping upon economy, it was designed that the expense should be defrayed by the colonists themselves.

While the king and his lords were measuring the resources of their American possessions, and contemplating the enormously increased debt of England with dismay, New York was engaged in a spirited tilt with both New Hampshire and Massachusetts concerning boundaries. The latter continued to claim a part of the Livingston and Van Rensselaer manors. Governor Wentworth of New Hampshire granted lands west of the Connecticut River, in what is now Vermont, which were claimed by New York, until all at once Lieutenant-Governor Colden discovered that one hundred and sixty townships, each six miles square, were in the hands of speculators, and publicly offered for sale at low rates.[1] The quit-rents in New Hampshire were much less than in New York, which was an inducement for settlers to purchase under the former province. Colden, who had been forty years a counselor, and was conversant with every detail of New York affairs, was greatly disturbed. He wrote to the Lords that New Hampshire's claim must be resisted. If the controverted territory was given up, the crown would be deprived of a quit-rent amounting yearly to a sum greater, in his opinion, than the amount of all the quit-rents that would remain. He argued that the New England governments were formed on republican principles, while the government of New York, on the contrary, was established as nearly as possible after the model of the English constitution. It was therefore impolitic to permit the power and influence of New Hampshire and Massachusetts to extend to the injury of New York.

John Watts wrote to Monckton, December 29, 1763:—

"We were yesterday in council declaring war against New Hampshire for scandalously hawking about townships to the highest bidders, and taking in every ignorant peasant both in this colony and the Jerseys. When will they make the colonies so happy as to settle their limits?"

He wrote further, January 21, 1764:—

"The case from the beginning, as I understand, is simply this. Eternal quarrels subsisted between the borderers, in which several lives were lost, and commissioners were appointed by the different governments to settle a line of jurisdiction or peace, to prevent the effusion of more blood. I was one of them myself; but we could agree upon nothing, their demands were so high. We argued for land to the Connecticut River, they for land to the South Sea; think

[1] *Lieutenant-Governor Colden to the Lords of Trade.*

Hosted by Google

how we were to meet! Afterwards, when the quotas of the colonies were settled in a grand congress at Albany, the thing was then more solemnly treated than ever, though to as little purpose; they would not allow us even the twenty miles from the Hudson River."

James Duane, a rising young lawyer, who had married Mary, the elder daughter of Robert, third lord of Livingston Manor, in 1759, was one of the most efficient advocates employed in the vain attempt to settle the question of rights and jurisdiction. He was the life and soul of the private suits between land-owners on the borders of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Jersey; he defended New York against the claimants along Lake Champlain under the French grants; he was so actively conspicuous in the New Hampshire quarrels that the coarse wit and abuse of the Vermonters were showered bountifully upon him; and he conducted much of the correspondence with the New York agents in England. It was he who drew up a concise and comprehensive summary of these agitations in a letter to the celebrated Edmund Burke. The king in council (in 1764) decided that the territory in dispute belonged to New York, and, within the next three years, Duane had purchased over sixty-four thousand acres among the Vermont hills, and founded the town of Duanesburg.[1] And it was Duane, who, during the Revolution, while the dispute about "the grants" perplexed Congress, was the main reliance of New York, and prevented, not without much difficulty, that body from yielding to the powerful influence of New England, and hindered New York from vindicating her rights by force.

These disputes, when at their height, in 1763, nearly fomented a civil

[1] James Duane was born in the city of New York in 1733. His father was Anthony Duane, a prosperous merchant, and his mother was Altea, the daughter of Abraham Kettletas. He studied law in the office of James Alexander. He acquired such eminence in his profession before the Revolution as to be retained in many suits, which, on account of the principle involved, interested large masses of the people both in New York and New Jersey, — as, for instance, that against the proprietors of East Jersey; that between the partners in the copper-mine company; Trinity Church against Flandreau and others; Sir James Jay against Kings College; Schermerhorn against the trustees of Schenectady patent; the king against Lieutenant-Governor Colden, in which case he was employed for the defendant, undertaking it after other counsel had declined through fear of Governor Monckton, who was really the plaintiff as well as judge; the suit being for fees received by Colden, and tried before Monckton, as chancellor. He was also attorney for Trinity Church in suits against intruders upon the king's farm, so noted in the revived claims of the numerous descendants of Anetje Jans. His briefs and written arguments, in these and similar cases, display profound legal learning. His subsequent career will appear more fully in future chapters. The late James C. Duane of Schenectady was his son. His oldest daughter married General North of Duanesburg; his second daughter married George W. Featherstonhaugh, an English gentleman, who was for some years consul at Havre. Another daughter married Alfred S. Pell of New York City.

Hosted by Google

war. At the same time Sir William Johnson was actively espousing the cause of the Mohawks and German settlers at Canajoharie, in their chronic controversy with William Livingston over the "planting grounds of the Mohawks." This property was included in the old Livingston patent (obtained by Philip Livingston, the father of William), to which reference has already been made. It was essential to a valid conveyance, that the sachems of a whole nation should affix their signature in full council. The Indians claimed that this had not been done, and collected of the Germans who were settling upon the land, annual rents either in corn or money. Matters had remained quiet because of the war, and for the reason that many of the Livingston heirs were minors. Since the winter of 1762 the settlers had been repeatedly served with ejectments by order of William Livingston. The affair was complicated through the conduct of George Klock, a German who owned a share in the patent, and acted as agent for the Livingston claimants. He invited several of the Indians to his house, and, having made them drunk, persuaded them to sign a paper acknowledging the legality of the original purchase, which he forwarded to the governor. Johnson convened the Indians, and a long examination followed. The Mohawks persisted in asserting that the land had been stolen from their grandfathers and privately surveyed in the night; and that they had always been beguiled and ruined with liquor. Livingston finally executed a release, and the savages were satisfied.

Almost immediately a knotty question came up respecting the rich lands in the beautiful Wyoming Valley. Agents from Connecticut appeared in Albany provided with £400 in money, and three barrels of pork, expecting to meet the Mohawk sachems, and enter into some amicable arrangement. The Indians were determined never to part with those hunting-grounds, and failed to put in an appearance. Sir William Johnson conversed with the gentlemen, who grew warm, and insisted upon the legality of their title by virtue of the old Connecticut claim "as far west as the Pacific Ocean," and expressed their determination to settle the valley and defend themselves. The Indians were full of wrath when the rumor reached them, and another convention was summoned. Pacific messages from Governor Fitch, of Connecticut, finally quieted them for the time.

But dark and heavy clouds covered the western sky. Notwithstanding the general treaty consummated by Sir William Johnson at Detroit in 1761, there was a savage design taking root to drive the English from the continent. Pontiac, the great king of the Ottawa Confederacy, was at work forming a league with the interior tribes, and in the spring of 1763, fell upon the garrisons along the lakes almost simultaneously, capturing

Hosted by Google

seven or eight, and scalping every man, woman, and child to be found. In fierce resentment at the lordly personage who had prevented the Six Nations from joining in the bloody work, Pontiac threatened the life of Sir William Johnson, and Johnson Hall was accordingly surrounded with a strong stockade flanked by two stone towers and guarded by soldiers, while the tenantry were promptly armed. Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland suffered severely along their borders, but the influence of Johnson over the Mohawks was so salutary that, with the exception of some slight incursions into Orange and Ulster Counties, New York was left comparatively unmolested.

Monckton returned to New York from the West Indies, but remained only for a brief period, leaving the government again in the hands of Lieutenant-Governor Colden. In March, 1763, Horsemanden succeeded Pratt as chief justice of New York.

The rapid growth of Episcopacy and the alarming decrease in the congregations of the Dutch churches induced the consistory of the latter about this time to call a minister who could officiate in the English language. Intermarriages among the English and Dutch families had from the earliest settlement of New York been frequent, and the educated part of the community understood both languages. The young people disliked Dutch preaching, and were constantly straying to Trinity Church. There were many, however, who were wedded to old habits and customs, and opposed the step lest it should involve the loss of doctrines, mode of worship, government, and perhaps the very name of the church. In order to harmonize all difficulties, Rev. Archibald Laidlie was called, through the medium of the Classis of Amsterdam. He was a Scotchman, educated at Edinburgh, and settled over a church in Flushing, Zealand. He arrived in New York in the spring of 1764. A revival of religion almost immediately followed. At the close of a prayer- **1764.** meeting one evening, a number of persons gathered about him saying: "Ah! Dominie, we offered up many an earnest prayer in Dutch for your coming among us; and truly the Lord has heard us in English."

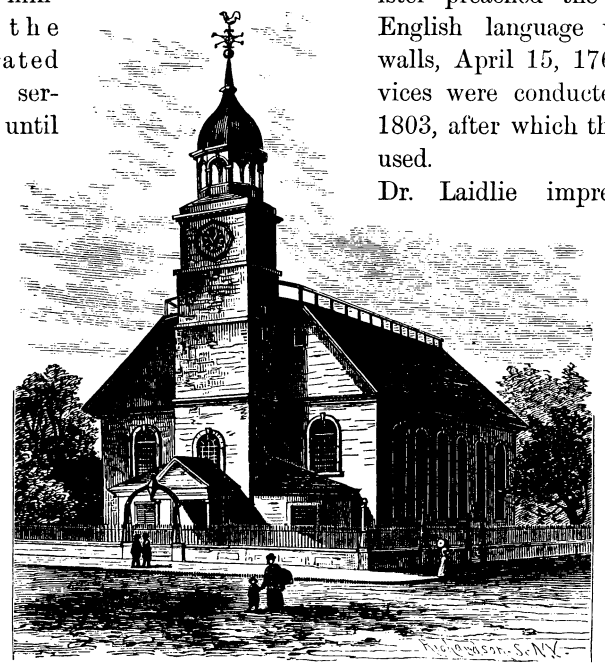
Such as were blindly attached to the Dutch language refused to be comforted, and instituted a suit in the civil court, which was decided against them, and then they went over to the Episcopal Church, declaring that if they must have English they would have all English.[1] Peter Van Brugh Livingston said, in relation to the innovation: "Had this happened in the city thirty years ago, the Dutch congregation would have been far more numerous than it is now. The greater half of Trinity

[1] *Memoirs of Rev. John Henry Livingston, D. D.*, by Rev. Dr. Gunn, 64, 66, 67, Dr. Laidlie was made a D. D. by the College of Princeton.

Hosted by Google

Church consists of accessions from the Dutch Church." As for himself, although his mother was a Dutch lady, and the Dutch language the first he had been taught as a child, and still spoke with ease, he could not understand a Dutch sermon half as well one in English, and of his children he said there was not one who could interpret a sentence in Dutch.

In the mean time the Middle Dutch Church (the late New York City Post-Office) had been remodeled, the pulpit removed to the north end and canopied by a ponderous sounding-board, and galleries been built on the east, west, and south sides. The new minister preached the first sermon in the English language within its consecrated walls, April 15, 1764. From that time services were conducted in both languages until 1803, after which the English only was used.



Middle Dutch Church.

Rev. Dr. Laidlie impressed the community favorably, and the church was soon crowded. Within three years a third house of worship was found necessary, and measures taken by the consistory to build the North Dutch Church.

About 1758 the Germans in New York City purchased an old building on Nassau Street, formerly used as a theater, for a place of worship, and established the German Reformed Church. The first pastor regularly called was Rev. Johan Michael Kern, a promising young divine of twenty-six, who had been educated at the University of Heidelberg, and was noted for the excellence of his character and for his rare Christian zeal. He arrived in September, 1763. He from the first took a deep interest in the affairs of the new church. He was not satisfied with its isolated and independent character; he told his elders and deacons that "independency in church was dangerous to both church and pastor." He

Hosted by Google

did not rest until he had secured the union of the church with the Classis of Amsterdam and Synod of North Holland, June 18, 1764. This brought it into connection with the Reformed Dutch Church of New York, and Dominie Kern was formally installed by the ministers of that organization, January 27, 1765. The old building where they worshiped was decayed and unsafe, and to save its falling they took it down. It was rebuilt, the corner-stone being laid by the young pastor, March 8, 1765. The expense was more than the congregation were able to meet, therefore a discouraging debt. The next year an appeal reached the Classis of Amsterdam for pecuniary aid. It was two years before an answer was vouchsafed. And this was the answer: "Though the condition and debt of your congregation are understood, and although all the circumstances are moving to pity, we cannot give any actual help, and recommend to your church *sparingness* and *good housekeeping*."

William Franklin was now governor of New Jersey. He had been appointed through the influence of the Earl of Bute. He completed his legal studies in England, and was admitted to the bar prior to 1762. He also traveled with his father through England, Scotland, Flanders, and Holland (France was then closed to English tourists); he was present at the coronation of the blundering but well-intentioned George III., enjoyed considerable celebrity through his dexterous experiments, and had gained many friends among the learned and fashionable who courted his father's society. Bute affected literature and science. He was a collector of books, pictures, and curiosities. He was fond of chemistry, and printed several volumes of Natural History for private circulation. He courted Dr. Franklin, and they seem to have been intimate. In 1762 he embraced the opportunity of making the fortune of the son of the latter. The favor was unsolicited on the part of the Franklins. Lord Halifax, the Secretary of State, did not choose to disregard a recommendation of Lord Bute, then the prime favorite of the king, but it is said that he called the young gentleman into his closet, and subjected him to a rigid examination, before bestowing the vacant governorship upon a native American of only thirty-two inexperienced years. The Penns were astonished and enraged. William Alexander (Lord Stirling) of New York was in London at the time, and spoke sneeringly of the appointment. But the people of New Jersey were well pleased, and when he reached New Brunswick, in February, 1763, he was escorted to the seat of government by "numbers of the gentry in sleighs, and the Middlesex troop of horse"; and the corporations of New Brunswick and Perth Amboy, the trustees of Princeton College, and a deputation of the clergy, presented him congratulatory addresses.

Hosted by Google

The death of Chief Justice Robert Hunter Morris, in January, 1764, deprived Franklin of one of the ablest counselors in the province. Smith (the historian) says that Morris went to a rural dance one evening, "led out the parson's wife, opened the ball, danced down six couples, and fell dead on the floor without a word or a groan or a sigh." Lord Stirling, who had returned to New York, immediately wrote, advising Hamilton to fill the office of chief justice as soon as possible, as it was dangerous to leave it open. Some unfit person might be sent from England. "If you fill it *during pleasure*, and recommend your appointment to the king for confirmation, it will most likely succeed." Among the few lawyers in New Jersey worthy of such a trust, he named Charles Reade, Philip Kearny, James Parker, and Cortlandt Skinner. Charles Reade was the fortunate candidate. Philip Kearny was an eminent and wealthy lawyer, who had filled many public stations. He lived in Amboy, in the house built by Governor Robert Hunter, which was described as having the "best conveniences of any house in town, besides a good stable for three or four horses," with large wine-cellar, etc. His son, Philip Kearny, married Susanna, daughter of Hon. John Watts,[1] the elder. His daughter Elizabeth became the wife of Cortlandt Skinner.[2] James Parker was appointed counselor, in October, to supply the vacancy occasioned by the death of Chief Justice Morris. He was a man of remarkable strength and vigor of character, and wielded a healthful influence. His wife was Gertrude, the sister of Cortlandt Skinner. She possessed many of the gifts, excellences, and striking characteristics of her Van Cortlandt and Schuyler ancestry, and not a few literary memorials of her have been preserved.[3]

Meanwhile changes were taking place in the cabinet of George III. Lord Grenville was promoted to the head of the Treasury. One of his

[1] Philip, the son of Philip Kearny and Susanna Watts, married his cousin Susan, daughter of Hon. John Watts (the younger), and their son was Major-General Philip Kearny of the U. S. Army.

[2] The mother of Cortlandt Skinner was Elizabeth, the daughter of Hon. Stephanus Van Cortlandt and Gertrude Schuyler (see page 604). His father was the first rector of St. Peter's Church in Perth, Amboy. He studied for the bar in the office of the distinguished David Ogden, of Newark, New Jersey.

[3] The children of James Parker and Gertrude Skinner were, John, married Ann, daughter of John Lawrence; Elizabeth, died unmarried; Janet, married Edward Brinley, of Newport, R. I.; Gertrude; Susan, died unmarried; Maria, married Andrew Smyth; William, died unmarried; James, married, 1st, Penelope, daughter of Anthony Butler, 2d, Catharine Morris, daughter of Samuel Ogden, of Newark. He was member of Congress, and held many other public offices. His children were: James, a distinguished judge in Ohio, married Anna, daughter of Cleaveland A. Forbes; William, married Lucy C. Whitewell, of Boston; Margaret Elizabeth, married William A. Whitehead of Newark; Penelope, married Edward Dunham of Brooklyn, L. I.; and Cortlandt Parker, the celebrated lawyer now residing in Newark, married Elizabeth Wayne, daughter of Richard W. Stites of Morristown.

Hosted by Google

first acts was to bring the scheme for taxing the colonies by means of *stamped paper* into tangible form.[1] It provoked warm discussions, but the king favored it, and the majority of the lords urged its accomplishment. Grenville was not altogether satisfied in his own mind that it was just to tax subjects without first allowing them representatives;[2] but he claimed that his measures were founded upon the true principles of policy, commerce, and finance. The laws had become as it were invalidated. He regarded the colonies merely as settlements in remote corners of the world for the improvement of trade. If the Acts of Navigation were disregarded, then England was defrauded of her natural rights. The monopoly of the exclusive trade with her colonies was no wrong.[3] On the contrary, the evasion of the laws in America was a theft upon the commerce and manufactures of Great Britain. It was estimated that of a million and a half pounds of tea consumed annually in the colonies, not more than one tenth part was sent from England! Grenville's reformatory mind leaped into severe conclusions. Custom-house officers had been bribed and corrupted,[4] to the great detriment of the nation's purse; he would show the world that England had one minister who had not only read her statute-book, but dared enforce her laws.

An order sped across the seas, sending all officers of the customs to their posts, and their numbers were increased. Positive instructions reached them also to enforce the Acts of Navigation to the letter, with the warning that he who failed or faltered was to be instantly dismissed from the service.

There had been no such energetic and conscientious interpretation of duty since the time of Lord Bellomont. Grenville would have inter-

[1] A revenue from stamped paper had been proposed and considered many years previously. As early as April, 1734, Governor Cosby suggested to the New York Assembly, "*a duty upon paper to be used in the Law and in all conveyances and deeds,*" as an experiment which might bring a considerable amount of money into the treasury. *Journal of the Assembly*, April 25, 1734. The Assembly did not adopt the measure. In 1744 a proposition to tax the colonies by means of *stamped paper* was made by the aspiring Lieutenant-Governor Clarke to Governor Clinton. But the latter, writing to the Duke of Newcastle on the 13th of December, 1744, describes the people among whom he lived, and doubts the expediency of the proposed measure. *Letter of Governor Clinton to Duke of Newcastle*, December 13, 1744.

[2] *Knox, Extra-official State Papers*, 11, 31. *Grenville to Knox*, September 4, 1768. *Grenville to J. Pownall. Grenville in Cavendish. Burke's Speech on American Taxation; Works*, I. 460.

[3] *Bancroft*, V. 159. *Campbell*, 73.

[4] The collector's clerk of Salem, Sampson Toovey, declared, on oath, that it was customary for masters of vessels from Portugal to give casks of wine, boxes of fruit, etc., as gratuity for being entered as carrying salt or ballast only, when their cargoes were fruit, etc., and that the Custom-House officer shared his goodies with the governor.

Hosted by Google

dicted foreign commerce, and excluded every foreign vessel. His policy was narrow and restrictive. The merchants of New York, with their broader notions and their vessels traversing the ocean, regarded the sheltered harbor and the miles of safe anchorage in deep water along the shores of Manhattan Island, which invited the commerce of the tropical islands, of continents, and of the world, with a prouder sense of possession than ever before, and nurtured the spirit of antagonism which had long since taken root, but which now sprang into rank and rapid growth.

Grenville foresaw difficulties. Hence he invoked the whole force of the king to assist the revenue officers. He ordered the governors in each of the provinces to make the suppression of illicit trade — the forbidden trade with foreign countries — the constant and immediate object of their care. He directed all officers, civil, military, and naval, in America and the West Indies to co-operate ; the commander-in-chief in America must place troops at the service of the officers of the revenue whenever desired. The king in council sanctioned the arrangement.

Admiral Colville was appointed commander-in-chief of the naval forces on the coasts of America, and each of his captains was fortified with a custom-house commission, and authority to enter harbors and seize suspected persons or cargoes. Stimulated by the prospect of large emoluments, they pounced upon American property as they would have gone in war in quest of prizes. Their acts presently became as illegal as they were oppressive. There was no redress. An appeal to the Privy Council was costly, difficult, and attended with aggravating and harassing delays.

The long and bloody war with the Indians, which had desolated the Ohio Valley, Western Pennsylvania, Maryland, and even reddened the waters of the Delaware, abated with the going out of the year 1763. The French interfered, sent kindly messages to the infuriated chiefs, and succeeded in checking their fierce wrath and hate towards the English. In a few months a definite treaty was signed, and the borders once more at peace.

But the country beyond the Alleghanies was not to be peopled, so said the blind Ministry. Colonies so far remote might not be easy to control. Let the strip of land beyond the present frontiers, "quite to the Mississippi, be a desert for the Indians to hunt in and inhabit."[1]

The impossibility of restraining Americans from peopling the western wilderness was quickly apparent. In defiance of proclamations and reiterated royal mandates, adventurers were constantly pushing beyond the boundaries and discovering wide and rich meadows and beautiful mountains, and starting plantations. There was fascination in hunting for

[1] *Bancroft*, V. 163, 164. *Lord Barrington's Narrative.*

Hosted by Google

fresh lands, and there was personal freedom in cutting down forests and building log-houses. To be a free-holder was the ruling passion of the age.

Grenville made a show of what he called "tenderness" to the American colonies, by postponing the stamp tax for a time. He also attempted to reconcile America to the proposed regulation. He argued the question with the agents from the colonies, and told them it was highly reasonable for dependencies to contribute towards the charge of protecting themselves, and no other tax was so easy and equitable as a stamp tax, or as certain of collection; if, however, any other mode of taxation would be more convenient, and of equal efficacy, he would consider a proposition.

Vigorous and manly pens and voices were lifted against the measure through the length and breadth of the colonies. New York told England through her press, *If the colonist is taxed without his consent, he will, perhaps, seek a change.* New York had, ever since the acquittal of John Peter Zenger, in 1735, maintained a free press, and otherwise led America.[1] New York had already been stricken dangerously through her commerce, and another blow might prove fatal.

Never was the arrival of an English packet awaited with more feverish interest in New York, than in the spring of 1764. It came in June. The famous Stamp Act, of which the world has heard so **1764.**

[1] In 1760 New York, by the protection of the crew of the *Sampson*, expressed her abhorrence of the impressment of seamen, and in 1764 betrayed a similar spirit of independence by the release of four fishermen. The account of the latter occurrence appeared in Holt's New York Gazette and Weekly Post-Boy, July 12, 1764: "We hear that on Tuesday last [July 10] four fishermen who supply the Markets in this City, were pressed from on board their Vessels, and carried on board a Tender from Halifax, belonging to one of his Majesty's Ships on that Station; And yesterday morning [July 11] when the Captain of the Tender came on shore in his Barge, a mob SUDDENLY *assembled* and seized the Boat, but offered no Injury to the Captain, who, it is said, publicly declared he gave no such orders, and offered to release the Fishermen, and going into the Coffee-house wrote and delivered an Order for that purpose. Meanwhile the MOB with great shouting, dragged the Boat thro' the streets to the middle of the Green in the Fields [*City Hall Park,*] where they burned and destroyed her, and dispersed as suddenly as they met, without doing any other mischief; some of the Company went on board the Tender with the Captain's *order* and brought the Fishermen on Shore. The Magistrates, as soon as they had notice, sent to disperse the MOB and secure the Boat, but the business was finished before they could interpose. The Court met in the afternoon, but were unable to discover any of the Persons concerned in the Mischief.

"There was method in the movements of this MOB which so *suddenly assembled* and dragged a boat through the streets from the foot of Wall Street to the City Hall Park, — under the very noses of the military who occupied the Barracks on the line of Chambers Street, — where they burned it, and then *dispersed as suddenly as they met,* and no one knew or would tell the magistrates who they were or whither they went. It is not improbable but that there existed at that time an organized body of minute-men who assembled on signal, and retired to their several occupations without fear of betrayal by their neighbors." — DAWSON.

Hosted by Google

much, and from which it is still reaping so bountiful a harvest, had actually been introduced into the House of Commons. The atmosphere was at once charged, as it were, with angry resentment. "I will wear nothing but homespun," exclaimed one. "I will stop drinking wine," echoed another, amazed that wine must pay a new duty. "I propose," cried a third, "that we dress in sheep-skins with the wool on." Judge Robert R. Livingston,[1] of Clermont, exclaimed: "It appears plainly that these duties are only the beginning of evils. The stamp duty, they tell us, is deferred till they see whether the colonies will take the yoke upon themselves, and offer something else as certain. They talk, too, of a land tax, and to us the Ministry seems to be running mad."

Three months later news reached New York that the king in council had dismembered New Hampshire, and thrown into New York the country west of the Connecticut River. "We are tried in Council about lands worse than ever," wrote John Watts. "It has been done without determining property; New Hampshire had granted a prodigious deal of it, and the proprietors think altering jurisdiction, neither should nor can alter property; those who obtain emoluments by regranting think otherwise. Some to secure a title at all events renew their grants. Some are sulky and will not. Many are poor and cannot." It was thought this would circumscribe republicanism in New England, for Otis and others were speaking bold words concerning the impending stamp-tax. The views of Otis were printed and sent to the Massachusetts agent in London. They were reprinted there. "The man is mad," exclaimed one of the ministers. "What then?" said Lord Mansfield, "one madman often makes many. Massaniello was mad; nobody doubted it; yet for all that he overturned the government of Naples." Boston was even then signing a covenant to eat no lamb, in order to encourage the growth and manufacture of wool; and men everywhere were entering into solemn agreement to use no single article of British manufacture, not even to wear black clothes for mourning.

The English statesmen pinned their faith to the superior loyalty of

[1] Judge Robert R. Livingston (the same of whom mention has been made, page 598) and Margaret Beekman had ten children, four sons and six daughters. Janet, born in 1743, married General Richard Montgomery, the hero of Quebec; Robert R., born in 1746, was the celebrated chancellor of New York; Margaret, born 1748, married Thomas Tillotson of Rhinebeck; Henry B., born in 1750, was a colonel in the Revolutionary Army; Catharine, born in 1752, married Rev. Freeborn Garretson of Maryland, one of the pioneers of the Methodist Church in this country; John R., born in 1755, was a prominent merchant; Gertrude, born in 1757, married the celebrated general, politician, governor, and judge, Morgan Lewis; Joanna, born in 1759, married the stirring politician Peter R. Livingston; Alida, born in 1761, married the distinguished General John Armstrong, Minister to France, Secretary of War, etc.; Edward, born in 1764, was the celebrated mayor of New York, law-giver, author, and statesman, who died in 1836.

Hosted by Google

New York; and yet no colony was more impatient of control, and nowhere was the spirit of resistance at that moment so strong. The merchants had been stung with the obstacles interposed in the way of their business, through the enforcement of obsolete, and, in their opinion, unjust laws, and the great landowners regarded arbitrary taxation as absolutely irreconcilable with their rights as British subjects and men. Of such elements was the Assembly composed. This body convened in September. Among its members were Philip Livingston, the eminent merchant, John Cruger, Leonard Lispenard, Frederick Philipse, second lord of Philipse Manor, Philip Verplanck, William Bayard, Peter De Lancey, Daniel Kissam, Henry Livingston, Judge Robert R. Livingston, and others of broad intelligence and sterling merit. It was in no humor to wait for concert of action among the colonies. It plunged straight into the very heart of the wrong. It adopted a memorial addressed to the House of Commons, declaring, in bold but courteous language, that Oct. 18. "the people of New York nobly disdained the thought of claiming liberty as a privilege"; but founded the exemption from ungranted and compulsory taxes, upon an honorable, solid, and stable basis, and challenged it, and gloried in it as their right; and, wielding a blade of exquisite temper, New York, through her proud, impulsive Legislature, peremptorily demanded a voice and vote in the administration of public affairs.

On the same day a committee was appointed to correspond with Robert Charles, the agent of New York in England, of which Judge Robert R. Livingston was made chairman. This committee was instructed to correspond also, during the recess of the House, "with the several Assemblies, or committees of Assemblies on this continent," upon the subject of the Act commonly called the *Sugar Act;* and concerning the Act restraining paper bills of credit in the colonies from being legal tender; and the several other Acts of Parliament lately passed with relation to the trade of the Northern colonies; and specially of the dangers which threaten the colonies of being taxed by laws passed in Great Britain."[1]

Each of the other colonies admitted the supremacy of Parliament, and maintained the duty of obedience to its acts, however erroneous, until repealed. Massachusetts was stirred to a defense of chartered privileges. New York had neither "chartered privileges" or "vested rights" to contend for, and firmly declared, from the very first, that she "would consider a violation of her rights and privileges, even by Parliament, an act of tyranny; and would abhor the power which might inflict it; and as soon as able cast it off, or perhaps try to obtain better terms from some other power." Illustrious writers have from time to time ably discussed

[1] *Journals of the Assembly. Bancroft. Dawson.*

Hosted by Google

the question as to whether Massachusetts or Virginia originated the Revolutionary Committees of Correspondence. It has not been the habit of New York to enter into fields of controversy upon such subjects. But the records of her Assembly dispose of the matter. The above Committee of Correspondence was appointed by New York, six years before Massachusetts immortalized herself in that direction, and nine years in advance of Virginia.

Lieutenant-Governor Colden was a conscientious servant of the crown. He was no favorite among the magnates of New York. There was something in his nature which stimulated opposition. He was rigid and exacting, and set like flint in his own opinions. He had always been more of a scholar than a statesman;[1] he now seemed only zealous to promote the interests of the king. There was little confidence and harmony between him and the Council. He rarely saw any of the gentlemen except at formal meetings. John Watts, polished, witty, and sarcastic, wrote to Monckton, "O, how we pant for a new governor's arrival! even though he should be as hot as pepper-pot itself, 't is better than the venomous stream we at present drink from." Oliver De Lancey wrote to Monckton, thanking him for attention to his boys, who were in England at school, and added: "I am truly concerned that the present Ministry have such despotic influence in Parliament as to carry measures that must bring immediate distress on this country, and consequently so on our mother country. The situation we are in with Mr. Colden is deplorable, but can't last long. Government really suffers disreputation in such hands."



Portrait of Cadwallader Colden.

[1] Gulian C. Verplanck, writing of Cadwallader Colden, says: "For the great variety and extent of his learning, his unwearied research, his talents, and the public sphere which he filled, he may justly be placed in high rank among the distinguished men of his time." Among the products of his industry were: "Observations on the Trade of New York"; "An Account of the Climate of New York"; "Memorial concerning the Fur-Trade of New York in 1724"; "History of the Five Nations"; "State of the Lands in the Province of New York"; "Reports on the Soil, Climate, etc., of New York"; "A Botanical Description of American Plants"; "Observations on Fevers"; "Observations on Throat Distempers"; "Reports on

Hosted by Google

Colden wrote to the Lords of the faithfulness with which he had investigated the "illicit trade" of New York. He said, since so many of his Majesty's ships had been cruising on the coast, the trade in teas and gunpowder from Holland and Hamburg had been effectually suppressed; it was suspected, however, that tea in small quantities was imported from the Dutch West India Islands, the vessels running into creeks and harbors, not navigable for ships of war, all along the New Jersey shore between Sandy Hook and Delaware Bay, and northward, on the Sound, where there were many such harbors. He suggested that if ships were kept continually cruising above and below Sandy Hook it would be difficult even for small vessels coming from sea to escape them.[1] He reported the New York Custom-House officers as very diligent. He said the merchants complained bitterly that the same vigilance was not maintained at the other ports; the merchants elsewhere on the seaboard were thus enabled to undersell them. Captain Kennedy was mentioned as in port with the *Coventry,* and about to purchase a swift running sloop, with which to "look into and examine the creeks and small harbors within his station."

In the midst of the commotion about taxation, Colden insisted upon the right of appeals from the common law courts of the province to the governor and Council, and finally to the king. It had been usual to bring questions concerning the law and the practice in these courts, by *writs of error,* before the governor and Council and the king for final adjudication; but never until now, had an appeal — by which the entire merits of the action, as well as the law and the action of the courts thereon, could be reviewed — been entertained by the provincial government. The judges refused to admit such appeals. The lawyers declared them absolutely unconstitutional. Chief Justice Horsemanden made a speech in Council giving his reasons for refusing an appeal, which was printed and circulated, to the infinite resentment of Colden. The latter talked about suspending the chief justice, but, knowing the temper of the gentlemen of his Council, and despairing of their concurrence, referred the matter to the king.[1]

the State of Indian Affairs, 1751"; "Principles of Action in Matter, and the Motion of the Planets"; "A Treatise on the Cure of Cancer"; "An Essay on the Virtues of the Plant called the Great Water Dock"; "Observations on Smith's History of New York"; "An Introduction to the Study of Philosophy"; "An Inquiry into the Principles of Vital Motion"; "A Translation of the Letters of Cicero"; "An Inquiry into the Operation of Intellect among Animals"; "Of the Essential Properties of Light"; "An Introduction to the Study of Physic"; and a great variety of other papers on public affairs, and scientific subjects; also an immense correspondence with the most distinguished scholars of the age in Europe and America.

[1] *Lieutenant-Governor Colden to the Earl of Halifax,* October 9, 1764.

Hosted by Google

Judge Robert R. Livingston, who had been appointed to the bench by Governor Monckton, wrote to the latter, that he was confident Colden had misinterpreted the royal instructions; he believed it was the intention of the Ministry that New York should be governed by the laws of England; and that those laws were better known and more strictly adhered to in New York than any other province. He could see no possible advantage to the crown from such irregular practice. "It is certainly better," said he, "that causes should be determined before those who make the law their study, than that the time of the governor and Council should be taken up with private concerns."

Colden complained of the dangerous combination which existed between the bench and the bar of New York. He wrote to the Lords that before the administration came into his hands the profession of the law had been encouraged, and had now gained pernicious influence. The judges and principal lawyers were proprietors of extravagant grants of land, or connected with such by marriage. They labored to excite popular dissatisfaction and tumults, until it was no marvel that the people thought they could intimidate a governor, and were so foolish as to attempt to play a similar game upon the king's ministers and the British Parliament.[1]

Judge Robert R. Livingston said "the affair might have been managed with much less noise, if Colden's fondness for showing himself in law matters, superior to the whole body of the law had permitted."[2] He, Colden, spoke of juries with contempt, represented lawyers as regarding only their own interests, said judges were fond of power; and he treated the Council contemptuously because they differed widely from him in their judgments.

Watts wrote to Monckton, that the Council had been accused by the "old mischief-maker" of opposing prerogatives, king's instructions, etc.; but that the point rested upon the true legal meaning of an instruction, upon which solemn advice had been taken. The opinion expressed by the whole body of law in New York, had been supported by the opinion of the chief justice and lawyers of both Philadelphia and New Jersey. "Greater testimonies were not to be obtained on this side of the water."[3] Referring to Colden, he said, "the old body was always disliked enough, but now the people would prefer Beelzebub himself to him. Whatever be right, I wish the old fellow had had more sense than to bring such a critical thing into dispute in these sore times. It could easily have

[1] The petitions and memorials that were sent to England by the New York Assembly were never seen by Colden.

[2] *Robert R. Livingston to General Monckton*, February 23, 1765.

[3] *Watts to Monckton*, January 28, 1765.

Hosted by Google

been avoided; there never was a precedent since the colony was settled, but, like Satan, he would damn himself and his posterity to appear great, which he thinks such controversies make him, having an unbounded opinion of his own parts, and being ready to sink all America, right or wrong, for prerogative."

William Smith, Jr., wrote to Monckton, that the "unseasonable attempt of Colden to introduce an innovation had inflamed the whole country."[1] The people believed the crown was aiming to deprive them of their most valuable rights. Smith said it was vividly remembered that in Clinton's time Colden had been voted an enemy to New York; and now he was the object of suspicion and cordial hatred.

The debate in the House of Commons prior to the passage of the Stamp Act was spirited and obstinate. It had been represented **1765.** to the king by the Board of Trade, December 11, 1764, that the **Feb.** Legislature of Massachusetts, through its votes in June, and the Assembly of New York, by its address to Colden in September, had been guilty "of the most indecent respect to the Legislature of Great Britain." The Privy Council reported this "as a matter of the highest consequence to the kingdom." The American question was presented by George III. on opening the session, January 10, as one of "obedience to the laws and respect for the legislative authority of the kingdom."

The Ministry resolved to be temperate but firm, and were complacently confident. Grenville listened to the remonstrances of the American agents in London, and abounded in gentle words. "Preserve moderation," he said. "Resentments indecently expressed on one side of the water will naturally produce resentments on the other. I take no pleasure in bringing upon myself the wrath of the colonists, but it is the duty of my office to manage the revenue."

Some of the Lords scoffed at the idea of American representation, while Grenville secretly resolved to propose it indirectly. Others declared that America was as virtually represented in Parliament as the great majority of the inhabitants of Great Britain. Beckford, a member of Parliament for London, a friend of Pitt, and himself a large owner of West India estates, declared boldly that "taxing America for the sake of raising a revenue would never do." Barré, the companion and friend of Wolfe, and sharer of the dangers and glories of Quebec, taunted the House with ignorance of American affairs, which brought Townshend, the reputed master of American affairs, quickly to his feet. At the close of an exhaustive argument concerning the equity of taxation, as proposed, he said, "will these American children, planted by our care, nourished by our indulgence

[1] *William Smith, Jr., to Monckton*, January 25, 1765.

Hosted by Google

to strength and opulence, and protected by our arms, grudge to contribute their mite to relieve us from the heavy burden under which we lie?"

Barré responded, with eyes emitting fire, and outstretched arm:—

"*They planted by* YOUR *care!* No; your oppression planted them in America. They fled from your tyranny to a then uncultivated, inhospitable country; where they exposed themselves to almost all the hardships to which human nature is liable, and among others to the cruelties of a savage foe, the most subtle, and I will take it upon me to say, the most formidable, of any people upon the face of God's earth; and yet, actuated by principles of true English liberty, they met such hardships with pleasure, compared with those they suffered in their own country, from the hands of those who should be their friends. *They nourished by* YOUR *indulgence!* They grew by your neglect of them. As soon as you began to care about them, that care was exercised in sending persons to rule them in one department and another, who were, perhaps, the deputies of deputies to some members of this house, sent to spy out their liberties, to misrepresent their actions, and to prey upon them,—men whose behavior on many occasions has caused the blood of those SONS OF LIBERTY to recoil within them; men promoted to the highest seats of justice; some who, to my knowledge, were glad, by going to a foreign country, to escape being brought to the bar of a court of justice in their own. *They protected by* YOUR *arms!* They have nobly taken up arms in your defense; have exerted a valor, amidst constant and laborious industry, for the defense of a country whose frontier was drenched in blood, while its interior parts yielded all its little savings to your emolument. And believe me,—remember I this day told you so,—the same spirit of freedom which actuated that people at first will accompany them still. But prudence forbids me to explain myself further. God knows I do not at this time speak from motives of party heat; what I deliver are the genuine sentiments of my heart. However superior to me in general knowledge and experience the respectable body of this house may be, yet I claim to know more of America than most of you, having seen and been conversant in that country. The people, I believe, are as truly loyal as any subjects the king has; but a people jealous of their liberties, and who will vindicate them, if ever they should be violated. But the subject is too delicate; I will say no more."

It was an unpremeditated speech, and was only regarded by the members at the time as a solid hit at Townshend; but the remainder of the debate seemed languid, and at midnight the House adjourned. In the gallery sat Jared Ingersoll, the agent of Connecticut, who, delighted with Barré's sentiments, sent a report of his speech to New London, where it was printed in the newspapers of the town. May had not shed its blossoms before the words of Barré were in every village and hamlet in America. Midsummer found them distributed through Canada in French.

Hosted by Google

And the name, SONS OF LIBERTY, which had fallen so naturally from his lips, rang from one end of the continent to the other.

The petitions of the colonists and the efforts of their agents were of no avail. The tide was irresistible. "We might," said Franklin, "as well have hindered the sun's setting." On the 27th of February the Stamp Act passed the House of Commons. It was to take effect on the first day of the next November. On the 8th of March, the bill was agreed to by the Lords without having encountered an amendment, debate, protest, division, or dissentient vote.[1] At that moment the king was ill; absolutely insane. As he could not ratify the Act in person, the royal assent was obtained by commission; the bit of parchment bore the sign of his hand, scrawled in the flickering light of a clouded reason. And that was what gave validity to the instrument.

The stamped paper was duly prepared. Grenville adopted what he esteemed the soothing policy of selecting the principal stamp-officers from among the Americans themselves; and they were duly qualified. "Now, gentlemen," said he, "take the business into your own hands; you will see how and where it pinches, and will certainly let us know it; in which case it shall be eased."

It was generally believed, even by the American agents, that the stamp tax would be peacefully levied. No one imagined the colonies would think of disputing the matter with Parliament at the point of the sword. Otis and Fitch and Hutchinson had all admitted the right of Parliament to tax, and had said, "If the Act becomes a law we have nothing to do but submit." Franklin wrote from London, "It will fall particularly hard on us lawyers and printers," never doubting it would go into effect.

The statesmen of England were jubilant. No tax was ever laid with more general approbation at the last. The Act seemed sure to enforce itself. Unless stamps were used marriages would be null, notes of hand valueless, ships at sea prizes to the first captors, suits at law impossible, transfers of real estate invalid, inheritances irreclaimable.

The news was received in America with disgust. "This single stroke has lost Great Britain the affection of all her colonies; what can be expected but discontent for a while, and in the end open opposition?" wrote William Smith, Jr. "The task may seem easier in theory than prove in the execution; I cannot conceive there will be silver or gold enough in the colonies to carry this Act through," wrote John Watts.

It was not long before the association known as the SONS OF LIBERTY was organized, and extended from Massachusetts to South Carolina. New

[1] *Bancroft*, V. 247.

Hosted by Google

York was the central point from which communications were despatched. The post-offices were under the control of the government, and as the utmost secrecy was esteemed essential, special messengers carried intelligence on all extraordinary occasions, and every effort was made to insure harmony in action. An agent in England furnished information of what was transpiring across the water.

Outwardly New York remained quiet. New England was slow to anger, and the States farther south appeared to acquiesce. But it was the quiet which precedes the storm. While consternation took possession of men's minds all along the American seaboard, and threadbare and patched coats became the fashion, an American congress was proposed by Otis, without consent of the king, to deliberate upon the acts of Parliament. Letters were sent to every assembly on the continent, proposing that committees should be appointed to meet in New York, on the first Tuesday of October. It was a novel proceeding. Many pronounced it visionary and impracticable. But union was the hope of Otis. At the same moment Virginia was preparing, at least in theory, to resist the execution of the stamp tax; resolutions were being passed in her Legislature, that the inhabitants of that dominion inherited from the first settlers equal franchises with the people of Great Britain; that their rights had never been forfeited or given up; that the General Assembly of Virginia had the sole right and power to lay taxes on the inhabitants; and, furthermore, that no man in the colony was bound to yield obedience to any tax-law other than those made by their own General Assembly, and whoever should, by speaking or writing, maintain the contrary was an enemy to the colony.

Simultaneously with these movements in Massachusetts and Virginia, the reprint of the Stamp Act was hawked through the streets of New York as the "folly of England and the ruin of America." The newspapers were filled with taunts and covert threats, and articles from the pens of able and intelgent writers appeared in every issue. An essay, signed "Freeman," was continued through several numbers, and is supposed to have been written by John Morin Scott.[1] It contained sound sober reasoning. "It is not the tax, it is the unconstitutional manner of imposing it, that is the great subject of uneasiness in the colonies," said the lawyer. "The absurdity of our being represented in Parliament is so glaring that it is almost an affront to common sense to use arguments to expose it. The taxation of America is arbitrary and tyrannical, and what the Parliament of England has no right to impose." The English constitution was carefully analyzed, and declared to have within itself the principle of self-preservation, cor-

[1] *New York Gazette*, Nos. 1170, 1171, 1173.

Hosted by Google

rection, and improvement, in short, real excellence, and no color of pretext for oppression. The writer went on to say: —

"If the interests of the mother country and her colonies cannot be made to coincide, if the same constitution may not take place in both, if the welfare of England necessarily requires the sacrifice of the most natural rights of the colonies, — their right of making their own laws, and disposing of their own property by representatives of their own choosing, — if such is really the case between Great Britain and her colonies, *then the connection between them ought to cease; and sooner or later it must inevitably cease.* The English government cannot long act toward a part of its dominions upon principles diametrically opposed to its own, without losing itself in the slavery it would impose upon the colonies, or leaving them to throw it off and assert their own freedom. There never can be a disposition in the colonies to break off their connection with the mother country, so long as they are permitted to have the full enjoyment of those rights to which the English Constitution entitles them. They desire no more; nor can they be satisfied with less."

"Thus," says the distinguished Bancroft, "New York pointed to independence."

These sentiments were seized and reprinted by nearly every newspaper in America; they were approved by the most learned and judicious, and even formed a part of the instructions of South Carolina to her agent in England.[1]

The clergy, beyond any other class of men, nursed the flame which was kindling. The first printed article pointing towards unqualified rebellion when the attempt should be made to enforce the stamp tax, was from the pen of Rev. Stephen Johnson, "the sincere and fervid pastor of the first church in Lyme, Connecticut."[2] "Bute, Bedford, and Grenville will be held in remembrance by Americans as an abomination, execration, and curse," he said. His stirring words obtained a place in the Connecticut papers, through the diplomacy of John McCurdy, a Scotch-Irish gentleman of fortune, residing in Lyme.[3] Pamphlets of a similar character

[1] *South Carolina to Garth*, December 16, 1765.

[2] *Bancroft*, V. 320. Rev. Stephen Johnson was the son of Nathaniel Johnson and Sarah Ogden, of Newark, N. J., and the great grandson of John Ogden, who founded Elizabethtown.

[3] John McCurdy was the "Irish gentleman" mentioned by Gordon and Hollister as "friendly to the cause of Liberty." He was an intimate personal friend of Rev. Stephen Johnson. The McCurdy mansion in Lyme, Connecticut, where many of these papers were written, is still standing, an interesting historical landmark, and is occupied by the grandson of the patriot, Hon. Charles Johnson McCurdy, the eminent jurist, Lieutenant-Governor of Connecticut, United States Minister to Austria, etc. Robert H. McCurdy, the well-known great importing merchant of New York City, is also a grandson.

Hosted by Google

were privately printed and scattered broadcast. "Treason!" exclaimed the officers of the government, when they saw them upon their tables, without knowing how they came there or by whom written. John McCurdy was in New York in August, and, learning that treasonable resolves were being handed about with great privacy, while as yet no one had the courage to publish them, he asked for, and with marked precaution was permitted to take a copy. He carried them to New England, where he caused them to be secretly printed, and immediately afterwards spread far and wide without reserve.

"The weekly newspapers are filled with every falsehood malice can invent to excite the people to sedition and disobedience of the laws," wrote Colden.

"You will think the printers all mad, Holt particularly," wrote John Watts to a correspondent in London. "He has been cautioned over and over again, and would have been prosecuted, but people's minds are so inflamed about this Stamp Act, that it would only be exposing the government to attempt it; what will be the end of all this bitterness, I own I can't see. The wearing of what plain cloths the country affords, and being content with cheap dress, must affect the British manufactures exceedingly, and will raise a riotous mob there as soon as any one thing."

The first popular outbreak was against the stamp-officers themselves. "Why allow a stamp-collector upon this side of the water at all?" whispered one and another. Grenville's policy in appointing Americans was but the addition of fuel to the fire. "It will be as in the West Indies, negro overseers are always the most cruel," was the cry. The names of the stamp-officers were published in Boston, August 8. "Had you not rather these duties should be collected by your brethren than by foreigners?" said a friend of Ingersoll, of Connecticut, who had just arrived, duly qualified. "No, vile miscreant! Indeed, we had not," exclaimed Dagget of New Haven. "If your father must die, is there no defect in filial duty in becoming his executioner in order to secure the hangman's fees? If the ruin of our country is decreed, are you free from blame for taking part in the plunder?"

Within a week the effigy of the Massachusetts stamp-officer, Oliver, was swinging, one morning at daybreak, on the bough of a stately elm, near the entrance to Boston. It was tricked out with the emblems of Bute and Grenville, and thousands collected to gaze upon the grotesque spectacle. Chief Justice Hutchinson ordered the sheriff to remove it, but the people, said "We will take it down ourselves at evening." And they did. A multitude, moving in order, bore the image on a bier directly through the Old State House, and under the Council Chamber itself, shouting at

Hosted by Google

the top of their voices, "Liberty, Property, and no Stamps." They then built a funeral pyre for the effigy in front of Oliver's house. Hutchinson directed the colonel of the militia to beat an alarm. "My drummers are all in the mob," was the reply. Hutchinson tried to disperse the crowd, and was obliged to run for his life. Oliver prudently resigned the next day. Hutchinson was suspected of favoring the Stamp Act, and the rougher spirits wrought each other into a frenzy, and, collecting at nightfall, a day or two later, in a mixed crowd, destroyed his house, furniture, books, manuscripts, and scattered his plate and ready money; the morning found what had been his home, a miserable ruin. The citizens of Boston denounced such outrages, and in town-meeting the next day pledged themselves to suppress the like disorders for the future. But the old elm was solemnly named "the Tree of Liberty."

Of Rhode Island, Gage wrote, "that little turbulent colony raised a mob likewise." And the "mob" compelled the stamp-master to resign. Maryland was in commotion; a party of four or five hundred, at Annapolis, pulled down a house which was in process of repairs, supposed for the sale of the stamps. Hood, the stamp-master, took refuge in the fort at New York. Connecticut waited quietly until Ingersoll was within her own borders. The famous crusade of five hundred mounted men from New London and Windham Counties, who met him in the woods of the Connecticut Valley, as he was riding towards Hartford to put himself under the protection of the government, has been many times graphically portrayed; the scene also in the main street of Wethersfield, where they compelled him to resign, and the manner in which they escorted him to Hartford. He rode a white horse. Some one asked him, jocosely, what he was thinking about.

"Death on a pale horse, and hell following," was his quick retort.

He was conducted to the Court-House, and ordered to read his recantation within hearing of the Legislature, and to shout "Liberty and Property" three times, which he did, swinging his hat above his head to the entire satisfaction of his captors. Coxe, the stamp-master of New Jersey, renounced his place, and the whole South, beyond Maryland, passed resolutions to resist the operation of the law. The last to yield, north of the Potomac, was John Hughes, a Quaker of Philadelphia, who, as he lay desperately ill, heard muffled drums beat through the city, and the State House bell ring, muffled, and the tramping of people about his house to demand his resignation. Thus was his written promise, to have nothing to do with putting the Stamp Act into execution, extorted. The islands of Jamaica and St. Christopher, the colonies of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, even Canada, revolted at the degrading statute, and determined to oppose it.

Hosted by Google

New York all this time was watched with intense interest. Aside from being the most important city on this continent, it was the headquarters of the standing army of Great Britain in America. The fearlessness of her press astonished not only her neighbors, but the statesmen across the water. "Ever since the matter of appeals was disputed last winter," wrote Colden to Secretary Conway, "the judges and lawyers have been publishing infamous articles to render me odious in the eyes of the people." James McEvers, who had been appointed stamp-distributor for New York, was unwilling to take the stamps in custody on their arrival, and sent a letter of resignation to Colden, who was at his country-seat at Spring Hill, Long Island.[1]

Colden repaired immediately to his residence in the fort, and wrote to General Gage for a military force sufficient to effectually prevent sedition and tumult. "You shall have as many troops as you demand, and can find quarters for," was the response. At the same time Gage recommended the "severe exertion of civil power." "McEvers is terrified," wrote Colden to Conway, "but I shall not be intimidated; I shall do everything in my power to have the stamped paper distributed at the time appointed by the Act of Parliament." In closing, he said: —

"I have at all times endeavored to perform my duty, and in some instances where I perceived the doing of it would be greatly prejudicial to my private interest; and I beg you will be assured, sir, that I shall continue to do so while the administration is in my hands."[1]

But Colden met with unexpected difficulties. The secret correspondence of the Sons of Liberty baffled his vigilance, notwithstanding that postmasters and postriders were brought before him, and examined. The Stamp Act Congress assembled in the City Hall on the 7th of October, in spite of his vehement declaration that it was unconstitutional, unprecedented, and illegal, and that he should give it no countenance. The press of New York continued to deny the right of Parliament to tax the colonies, and a new paper, called "The Constitutional Courant," with the device of a snake, cut into parts (to represent the colonies), with "JOIN OR DIE" as a motto, actually appeared, and had an immense sale at the very moment the fort was being put in a state of offense and defense, and while Major James of the artillery was hurrying to increase his stock of powder, shot, and shells.[3] "JOIN OR DIE" was echoed far and wide, as

[1] *McEvers to Colden. New York Col. MSS.*, VII. 761.

[2] *Lieutenant-Governor Colden to Secretary Conway*, September 23, 1765.

[3] This paper was privately printed in Woodbridge, New Jersey, and reprinted in both New York and Boston. Colden tried to discover the printer, but failed.

Hosted by Google

soon as it was rumored that Major James had said he would "cram the stamps down the throats of the people with the end of his sword." "Three or four popular lawyers who have raised this spirit of insubordination cannot be curbed without proper judges," wrote Colden, despairingly. Even then the sterling merchants were carefully preparing an agreement to send no new orders for goods or merchandise, to countermand all former orders, and not even to receive goods on commission unless the Stamp Act was repealed.

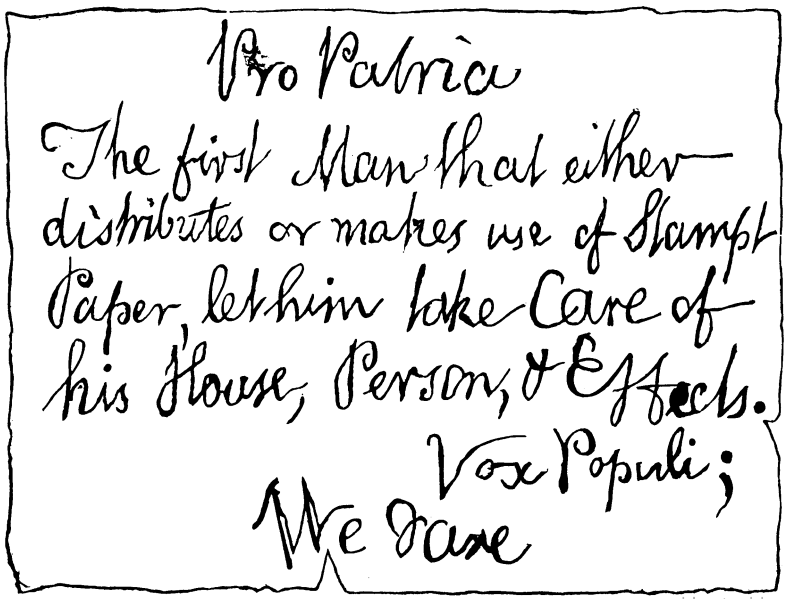
New York was represented in the Stamp Act Congress by Judge Robert R. Livingston, Mayor John Cruger, Philip Livingston, Leonard Lispenard,[1] and William Bayard. Its deliberations occupied three weeks. The members believed themselves responsible for the liberties of the con-

[1] Leonard Lispenard was born in the city of New York in 1716. He was the son of Anthony Lispenard, Jr., and grandson of Anthony Lispenard, a Huguenot refugee who came to New York about the middle of the seventeenth century. He married, in 1741, Alice, daugh ter of Anthony Rutgers. This lady inherited from her father, who died in 1746, one third of the extensive grants which he had received from George II. ; and Lispenard purchased, September 28, 1748, from the two sisters of his wife (one of whom was Mrs. Rev. Dr. Barclay), the remaining two-thirds, thus becoming proprietor of the whole. This was the origin of what has since been known as the Lispenard estate. Lispenard was a large merchant, was alderman of the city for a dozen or more years, was one of the active members of the Stamp Act Congress, and was connected with nearly all the later important committees. He was a member of the Assembly from 1765 to 1767. He was one of the original members of the Society of the New York Hospital, and one of its first governors from 1770 to 1777. He was also treasurer of King's College for a long period. His country mansion was on Lispenard Hill, a handsome elevation overlooking what was afterwards St. John's Square. The center of this hill was the present junction of Hudson and Desbrosses Streets. He had three children : 1, Leonard ; 2, Anthony ; 3, Cornelia, who married Thomas Marston of New York. Leonard Lispenard, Jr., was born in 1743, and was one of nine who graduated from King's College in 1762. He was a merchant and member of the Chamber of Commerce. He traveled extensively in Europe, and was spoken of as a man of fine education and intelligence, and great symmetry of character. He was the proprietor of the property known as "Davenport's Neck" in New Rochelle, where he had a summer residence. He never married. His brother Anthony married his cousin Sarah, daughter of Andrew Barclay (merchant) and niece of Rev. Dr. Barclay. He, Anthony, was proprietor of extensive breweries and mills on the Greenwich road, near the present foot of Canal Street. He had six children, three sons and three daughters. They were, 1, Leonard (3d), who married his cousin (their mothers were both daughters of Andrew Barclay) Anna Dorothea, daughter of Theophylact Bache, and left four children ; 2, Anthony, Jr., died unmarried ; 3, Thomas, died unmarried ; 4, Helena Roosevelt, married Paul Bache, son of Theophylact Bache ; 5, Sarah, married Alexander Stewart of New York, and was the mother of Lispenard Stewart ; 6, Alice, died unmarried. The down-town streets, Leonard, Anthony (now Worth), and Thomas were named by Anthony Lispenard after his three sons, and Lispenard Street was so called by the corporation of the city in honor of the family. Bache Street, now spelled Beach, which was opened through the Lispenard farm, was named for Paul Bache. The Lispenards sleep in the family vault in Trinity Churchyard. The honored name is now merged in the families of Stewart, Webb, Nicholson, Livingston, Le Roy, and Winthrop, who are among the descendants in the direct line. *Biographical and Historical Sketches. Chamber of Commerce Records.* By John Austin Stevens.

Hosted by Google

tinent. They were of various characters and opinions; they came from colonies remote from each other. "To do them justice," wrote John Watts, "I believe they have deputed some of their best men, and I imagine the fruits of their deliberations will be sensible and moderate enough." Ruggles of Massachusetts and Ogden of New Jersey believed resistance to the Stamp Act was treason. The debates were earnest and exciting. The validity of the Acts of Navigation was assailed, and it was finally determined to "insist upon a repeal of all acts laying duties on trade, as well as the Stamp Act." An address to the House of Commons, pointing out the disadvantages of the new measure, was penned in a clear, concise, and elegant manner by John Cruger. Every word and phrase was subsequently weighed with anxious care, some of the members constantly interposing scruples and timidities. It was finally signed on the morning of the 25th of October.

While the Stamp Act Congress was still in session a ship arrived laden with stamps. It was announced off Sandy Hook by the firing of cannon from a man-of-war in the harbor, about ten o'clock at night, October 23. The next day the ship was convoyed under the protection of the guns of the fort, by a war-vessel and tender, with great parade. A vast number of people beheld the scene and were furiously enraged. The shipping at the wharves lowered their colors in sign of grief. That night papers were posted upon the doors of every public office and upon the corners of the streets; the following is a fac-simile: —



Hosted by Google

"We will no more submit to Parliament than to the Divan at Constantinople," were the words uttered by one of the members of the Congress, which flew from mouth to mouth. The excitement was intense. The whole city, as one man, seemed determined to prevent the landing of the stamps.

Colden summoned the counselors together for advice, but of seven only three came, — Chief Justice Horsemanden, Judge William Smith, and Joseph Reade. These were ominously reticent. They warned the lieutenant-governor that the detention of the ship, which was a merchant vessel, rendered him liable to suits for damages from every merchant who had any goods on board, and the cost of suits, and damages allowed, might amount to a very large sum. He was perplexed. He even accused the judicial gentlemen, who suggested the transfer of the goods to a sloop, of being desirous of beginning a riot.

The continued preparations at the fort for defense were looked upon as an insult by the citizens at large. "The Declaration of Rights and Grievances of the Colonists in America," which had just emanated from the Congress, was all very well, but the stamps must not be distributed nor business delayed for the want of one.

On the 31st of October, the governors of the several colonies took the required oath to carry the Act into effect; and yet there was not one who dared make the attempt. Colden retired within the fort, fully persuaded that he should overawe the people with his loaded guns and strong guard. "He was fortified as if he had been at Bergen-op-Zoom, when the French besieged it with a hundred thousand men," wrote John Watts, "which gave more offense and made people's blood run higher than any one thing that happened." It was termed the "last day of liberty," and numbers of people were flocking into town; they came, so said Gage, by thousands. They uttered terrifying threats. They sang ballads as they wandered through the streets. The favorite was one of thirteen verses, with a chorus, which had been produced by no indifferent versifier, and printed and scattered broadcast a short time previously. A few specimen lines will suffice: — Oct. 31.

> "With the beasts of the wood, we will ramble for food,
> And lodge in wild deserts and caves,
> And live poor as Job, on the skirts of the globe,
> Before we 'll submit to be slaves, brave boys,
> Before we 'll submit to be slaves," etc.

In the evening the merchants met at Burns's tavern to consummate the first blow struck at the trade and industry of Great Britain. Over two hundred signed the non-importation agreement. "England will

Hosted by Google

suffer more by it in one year," wrote Judge Robert R. Livingston, "than the stamp tax or any other — should others be imposed — could ever recompense. Merchants have resolved to send for no more British manufactures, shopkeepers will buy none, gentlemen will wear none; our own are encouraged, all pride in dress seems to be laid aside, and he that does not appear in homespun, or at least a turned coat, is looked upon with an evil eye. The lawyers will not issue a writ. Merchants will not clear out a vessel. These are all facts not in the least exaggerated; and it is of importance that they should be known."[1]





Stamps.

A large number of boys and sailors gathered in front of the house where the merchants were assembled, a rumor having been spread that some foolish ceremony of burying liberty was about to be executed; but when they found that the merchants peaceably separated, and that there was to be no show, they proceeded through the streets, hurrahing and whistling, but did no further mischief than to break a few windows.

Many of the merchants belonged to the secret order of Sons of Liberty, and to secure the co-operation of merchants throughout the colonies resolved to appoint a special committee of correspondence. The danger appalled many who were nominated, and they withdrew their names. Finally, Isaac Sears, John Lamb, Gershom Mott, William Wiley, and Thomas Robinson volunteered their services, and were accepted.[2]

More fearless, energetic, or radical men for the service it would hardly have been possible to find. They left no stones unturned. On the 14th of November the names of the merchants of Philadelphia had been added to the formidable list, and on the 9th of December those of Boston. It will therefore be seen that the great system of intercolonial correspondence originated in New York, and was sustained through the medium of regularly constituted committees.

The memorable 1st of November was ushered in by the tolling of muffled bells, and pennants hoisted at half-mast. During the day letters were sent and found, and papers stuck up all over the town, threatening destruction to every person and his property, who should in any way touch a stamp, or delay business for the want of one. A placard ad-

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, Vol. X. 517.

[2] *Leake's Life of General Lamb. Bancroft*, V. 355. *Dawson's Sons of Liberty*, p. 86.

Hosted by Google

dressed to the lieutenant-governor, which had been posted in the Merchants' Coffee-house all day, was delivered at the fort towards evening by an unknown hand. It assured Colden of his fate if he did not that night make oath solemnly before a magistrate, and publish it to the people, that he would not execute the Stamp Act.

The crowds of people increased as the day waned. Sailors came from vessels in the harbor, and country people were constantly arriving. Troops from Turtle Bay marched through town to the fort, a strong guard was placed about the jail, and the cannon of the merchants, at Copsy Battery, near the foot of Whitehall Street, was spiked by order of Colden. This last act created fresh indignation.

About seven o'clock an organized band of the Sons of Liberty appeared in the streets, led by Isaac Sears, and, proceeding to the common, erected a movable gallows, upon which they hung an effigy of Colden, and one of the Devil whispering in his ear. His Satanic Majesty held a boot in his hand, designed as a satire upon the Earl of Bute. They marched down Broadway to the fort, attended by a most formidable mob, carrying candles and torches. Another party, meanwhile, had placed an effigy of Colden upon a chair, with which they were parading through other streets, now and then firing a pistol at the effigy. In front of the house of McEvers, they halted and gave three cheers.[1] They placed the gallows, with the effigy swinging thereon, within ten feet of the fort-gate. The populace knocked, placed their hands on the top of the ramparts, called out to the guards to fire, threw bricks and stones against the fort, and used the most offensive language. Not a word was returned, General Gage having prudently given orders to that effect. The mob broke into the lieutenant-governor's coach-house, and, taking out his chariot, dragged it through the streets to the common and back again. The fort fence facing Broadway had been taken down by the soldiers, in order to expose the assailants to the fire of the fort, which was another cause of wrath. Hence the boards were gathered into a pile, and the chariot, chair, gallows, effigies, and every movable which could be found in the stables, placed upon them, and the whole set on fire.

The leaders evidently intended that proceedings should end here. But the mob had become excited and unmanageable. They broke into the house of Major James[2] who was an object of hatred because of unwise boastfulness, brought out his rich furniture,—everything, indeed, which the house contained,—with which they made a bonfire in front of his door, drank his liquors, knocked to pieces the doors, partitions, windows, etc., destroyed his summer-house, and desolated his fine gardens. With the

[1] The house of McEvers was on the site of what is now 50 Wall Street. *Dawson.*

[2] Vauxhall.

Hosted by Google

exception of considerable noise, and an attack upon a few other houses without serious results, the mischief ended for that night.

But messages and letters were sent to the fort in the morning, that nothing would satisfy the people save the surrender of the stamps, and that the fort would be attacked at night. The majority of the counselors stood aloof in this emergency. Those who gave advice were of the opinion that Colden had no legal authority to distribute the stamps in any event. A governor had been appointed for New York in the place of Monckton, and would shortly arrive; they thought it better to do nothing about the stamps until then.

Meanwhile the mayor and aldermen were in consultation at the City Hall, and were joined by Judge Robert R. Livingston, James Duane, and one or two other gentlemen of the law. They were extremely dejected; they were powerless unless Colden would make concessions, and thus quiet the minds of the people. A message finally came from the
Nov. 2. fort, in the form of a placard, announcing that the lieutenant-governor would distribute no stamp papers, but leave the matter to be regulated by Sir Henry Moore; and was willing to put them aboard a man-of-war, if Captain Kennedy would receive them, which he, unwilling to offend the people, declined.

"We will have the papers within four-and-twenty hours," cried Sears to the multitude, who responded with shouts. "Your best way is to advise the governor to send the papers to the inhabitants," he continued, addressing the gentlemen who, by request of the corporation, were trying to put in the best light what Colden had condescended to say. Livingston and Duane went personally to the captains of ships, presuming that disturbances would begin among the unruly sailors; and with others they patrolled the town. There were indications of a riot; yet nothing serious occurred. The next day was Sunday. A letter was written to the Custom-House officers threatening destruction if they did not clear out vessels as usual. A paper was posted up in the Coffee House, telling the people not to mind the peaceable orators who had prevented their operations on Saturday evening, but to be resolute, as they would be commanded by men who had given proofs of courage in defense of their country. The time fixed for the assault was Tuesday, November 5, and the notices were signed *The Sons of Neptune.*

The secret unknown party which threatened such bold things sent dread and terror through the city, for an attack on the fort was but the precursor of civil war. Early Monday morning Colden summoned Mayor Cruger and some of the more prominent citizens to the fort, and renewed the promise made on Saturday. The following notice was at once posted conspicuously:—

Hosted by Google

"The governor acquainted Judge Livingston, the mayor, Mr. Beverly Robinson, and Mr. John Stevens, this morning, being Monday, the 4th of November, that he would not issue, nor suffer to be issued, any of the stamps now in Fort George.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON,
JOHN CRUGER,
BEVERLY ROBINSON,
JOHN STEVENS.

The Freemen, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of this city, being satisfied that the stamps are not to be issued, are determined to keep the peace of the city, at all events, except they should have other cause of complaint.[1]"

Before night, notices were posted directly under the above, in all the public places, inviting a meeting in the "Fields" on Tuesday evening, November 5, and requesting every man to come armed for the purpose of storming the fort. Colden wrote to the Marquis of Granby, Tuesday morning, "I expect the fort will be stormed this night, — everything is done in my power to give them a warm reception. I hope not to dishonor the commission I have the honor to wear, and trust I may merit some share of your Lordship's regard." Nov. 4. Nov. 5

It was at this critical moment that the strong, fearless judgment of Mayor Cruger asserted itself. It was impossible to determine how formidable the secret *Vox Populi* was; at all events an attempt to remove the stamps from the fort by force could not fail to be attended with bloodshed. It was believed that the people would put entire confidence in the mayor and aldermen, and with good reason. They were known to be among the most candid and determined opponents of the Stamp Act. Mayor Cruger, Isaac Roosevelt and others of the aldermen, had been among the first to sign the non-importation agreement.[2] Hence proposals were made to Colden in writing, that the city corporation should take the stamps into its own custody.

Colden did not answer promptly, although he afterwards remarked to Judge Livingston that the proposition was agreeable to him.[3] A deputation of merchants waited upon and urged him to deliver the stamps to the corporation. He pleaded his oath to the king, and the great contempt into which the government would fall by concession. His counselors advised him to yield. Still he hesitated. At four o'clock, P. M., a large crowd collected about the City Hall to learn results. The mayor, attended by the aldermen, visited the fort and warned Colden of the

[1] This notice is in the Archives of the New York Historical Society.

[2] Isaac Roosevelt was a great sugar-refiner, and "a beloved, honored, tried, true, and consistent patriot." He died in 1794, aged sixty-eight years.

[3] *Judge Robert R. Livingston to Monckton*, November 8, 1765.

Hosted by Google

imminent danger of further delay. He was in great distress, and appealed to General Gage for counsel. The latter avowed the belief, that a fire from the fort would be the signal for "an insurrection" and the commencement of a civil war. "So," says Bancroft, "the head of the province, and the military chief of all America, confessing their inability to stop the anarchy, capitulated to the municipal body which represented the people." The promise was obtained that the stamps should be surrendered to the corporation. According to the newspapers of the day, the mayor and aldermen, attended "by a prodigious concourse of people of all ranks," soon after proceeded to the fort gate, and received the papers;[1] the crowd gave three cheers, and after seeing the packages carried to the City Hall, dispersed. Tranquillity was thus restored to the city.

The moderation of General Gage won a testimonial of gratitude from the city authorities, the original of which, in the handwriting of Mayor Cruger, is preserved.

Henceforward nothing was talked of but non-importation. English merchants were notified to ship no more goods to America until the repeal of the Stamp Act, as American merchants unanimously declined selling on commission after January 1, 1766. A market-place was established below the exchange for the vending of articles of home manufacture, to obviate somewhat of the inconvenience of the course pursued.

Sir Henry Moore, the new governor, arrived on the 13th; in the same vessel came a second shipment of stamps. He had been lieutenant-governor of Jamaica, in the West Indies (his birthplace), where he at one time suppressed an alarming insurrection of the negroes, for which he was honored with a baronetcy by the king.[2] He was an easy, sensible, well-bred, gentlemanly man, experienced in business. One of the first questions he put to the Council was, whether it would be practicable to issue the stamps. These gentlemen were, Chief Justice Horsemanden, Sir William Johnson, George Clarke, William Smith, John Watts, William Walton, Oliver De Lancey, Charles Ward Apthorpe, Joseph Reade, William Alexander (Lord Stirling), and Roger Morris, — the two latter having been added to the board by the Earl of

Nov. 13.

[1] In the minutes of the Common Council of the City of New York may be seen a copy of the mayor's certificate of receipt, promising to take charge and care of stamps, etc., together with formal surrender of the stamps by Lieutenant-Governor Colden, with reasons given.

[2] Sir Henry Moore was the grandson of John Moore, who settled in Barbadoes in the reign of Charles II., and, having amassed property, removed to Jamaica. Sir Henry Moore was the only native colonist who was governor of New York. He married the daughter of Chief Justice Long of Jamaica, and sister of Hon. Edward Long, Judge of the Court of Admiralty, and author of the History of Jamaica. *N. Y. Col. MSS.*, VIII. 197. *Doc. Hist. N. Y.*, III. 524 – 527.

Hosted by Google

Halifax, in the recent instructions prepared for Moore. They replied unanimously, "No."[1] The next question was whether the counselors approved of reducing the fort to its former condition, as he thought it wore "too hostile an appearance in a friend's country," and found that nothing would give greater satisfaction. Colden remonstrated, as he was alarmed for his personal safety if the gates were thrown open, but the fort was dismantled, notwithstanding, and the new governor suspended his power to execute the Stamp Act. The Assembly, which Colden had prorogued from time to time for more than a year, came together, and confirmed the doings of its Congressional committee. Nov. 14.

Everybody was in good humor. The citizens sent a congratulatory address to Governor Moore, and on the evening of the following day assembled in the Fields, erected pyramids to his honor, and concluded with a magnificent bonfire.

The Sons of Liberty exercised the most consummate vigilance, however. They waited upon Peter De Lancey, Jr., who had returned from England in the same vessel with Sir Henry, qualified as a stamp-distributor in the place of McEvers, and convinced him of the danger of serving in that capacity. He accordingly resigned. Hood, the Maryland refugee, who had been protected by Colden, was known to be at the country-place of the latter on Long Island. He was visited and compelled to resign, and also to make oath of the sincerity of his renunciation (28th November). Fearing McEvers might resume his former appointment in case the law should be enforced, he was called upon, December 2, for an actual and perpetual renunciation. The ship *Minerva*, which was reported to have brought stamps, was boarded at midnight by a large force, and, notwithstanding the commander asserted that the obnoxious documents had been lodged in the fort, it was searched from stem to stern. By secret advices from Philadelphia, it was learned that the stamps were shipped upon a brig, which, appearing soon after, was boarded, and ten packages found, seized, taken on shore to a convenient place and burned. At the same time news came that Lewis Pintard, a New York merchant, had sent to Philadelphia a bond and a Mediterranean pass on stamped paper.[2] The person from whom they had been procured was found, and compelled to deliver up all in his possession, which were also set on fire. Pintard, in order to elude the vengeance of the populace, declared on oath that he was not aware the documents were stamped at the time he transmitted them.[3]

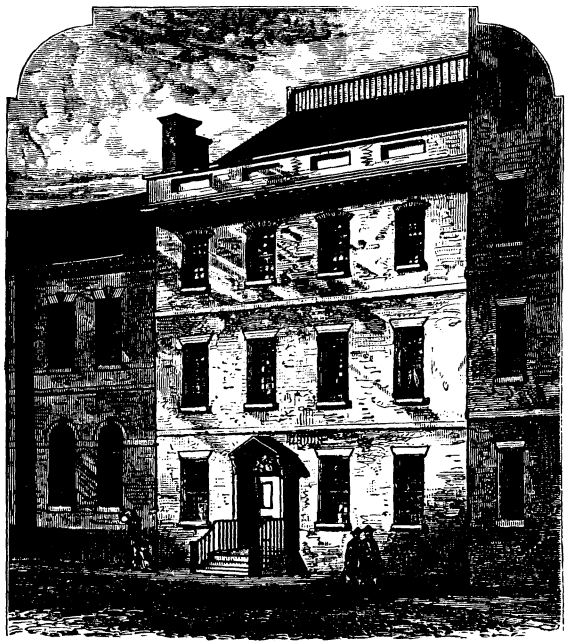
[1] *Watts to Monckton*, November 22, 1765.

[2] This pass was a written permission from the Algerians to pass the Strait of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean Sea.

[3] *Leake's Life of General Lamb. Holt's New York Gazette. Letters of Sons of Liberty in Philadelphia to the New York Committee*, February 15, 1766.

Digitized by Google

"The Custom-House clear vessels out, certifying there are no distributions of stamp paper," wrote John Watts, "which is literally true, all of the distributors having resigned, and no others to be found hardly enough to accept; but in this port alone, men-of-war stop the shipping, unless a few vessels that steal out by night, which sours the inhabitants greatly, and it 's to be feared Captain Kennedy and they will be at odds soon, if they are not put upon a footing with their neighbors. The ill-boding aspect of things, cramping of trade, suppression of paper money, duties, courts of admiralty, appeals, internal taxes, etc., have rendered people so poor, cross, and desperate, that they don't seem to care who are their masters, or indeed for any masters."



Residence of Hon. John Watts, No. 3 Broadway.

Presently, however, New York rose in such anger, that although the city was the headquarters of the army, the naval commander, alarmed by the prospect of riots, left the road to the ocean once more free, as it had all the while been from every other harbor in the thirteen colonies.

The Ministry of England were amazed at the turn events were taking in America; and the only Ministry bent resolutely upon enforcing the stamp tax had affronted the king and been dismissed from power. The greatest unanimity pervaded the colonies, widely sundered as they were from one another; nothing less than the absolute repeal of the odious law would be tolerated. They deprecated the necessity of declaring independence, and yet abhorred and rejected unconditional submission; they repelled the name of "republican," as a slander upon their loyalty, and spurned "passive obedience." Meanwhile divisions confounded the councils of the English nation, and the mind of the king fluctuated like a

Hosted by Google

weather-vane. Rockingham declared that compulsory taxation was the doctrine of absolute monarchy, not of the British Constitution. The rightfulness of the Stamp Act was actually in dispute, and sentiment was about equally divided around the throne. On the 3d of October, the great statesmen of the realm agreed that the American question was too weighty for their decision, and that Parliament must be consulted.

The news which came across the water distressed the king. The surrender of the stamps at New York to the municipal government of the city, he regarded as "extremely humiliating." "This is undoubtedly the most serious matter that ever came before Parliament," he said, and was impatient to receive a minute report of all that should occur.

There was a succession of stormy debates. Some claimed with great energy that the repeal of the Stamp Act would be a surrender of sovereignty; that there would be no submission until there was subjection; that persons of note and learning had originated the mischief, and had poisoned the common people until they were mad and infatuated; that New York and Boston would be defenseless against a royal fleet, and, they being brought under, no other town or place could stand out. "I hope," exclaimed the excited Bernard, "that New York will have the honor of being subdued first." He considered the metropolis as the source of the system of politics which pervaded the colonies; and on account of its superior rank and greater professions of resistance, as well as for being headquarters, should be made a shining example.

"If England does not repeal the Stamp Act, we will repeal it ourselves," rang out from America upon the opening of the new year. **1766.** The Sons of Liberty in New York, at their regular meeting on the Jan. 7. 7th of January, resolved, that "there was safety for the colonies only in firm union of the whole"; and that they themselves "would go to the last extremity, and venture their lives and fortunes, effectually to prevent the Stamp Act."

On the 14th, in the midst of a long discussion, Pitt unexpectedly entered the Chamber of Parliament. He was in feeble health, and it had been a long time since he had been there. All eyes Jan. 14. were directed towards the venerable man of sixty, who had said, if he "could crawl or be carried, he would deliver his mind and heart upon the state of America." Nugent was just at the moment insisting that the honor and dignity of the kingdom obliged the compulsory execution of the Stamp Act. When he had finished, Pitt arose in his place; the agents from the colonies in the gallery gazed upon him as if he were their guardian angel. His speech, abounding in strong, bold argument, subtle sarcasm, and singular power, was reported by Moffat of Rhode Island, and

Hosted by Google

shortly was within the reach of every reading man in America. A pause ensued when he ceased, and then Conway arose; he not only endorsed the views of Pitt, but believed the latter expressed the sentiments of nearly all the king's servants, and wished it might be the unanimous opinion of the House. Grenville, who, sitting next but one to Pitt, had writhed under the lash, came to his feet and spoke warmly in favor of his pet scheme. "The seditious spirit of the colonies owes its birth to the factious spirit in this House," he said with emphasis; and with much heat attempted to wipe off the aspersions cast upon his own conduct. Several members arose after him, but the House clamored for Pitt, who seemed to rise. A point of order was decided in his favor, and the walls resounded with "Go on, go on!" The assemblage was hushed into breathless silence; floods of light poured from his eyes, and his voice trembled with feeling and passion, as he answered to the charge of having given birth to sedition in America. "Sorry am I," said he, "to hear the liberty of speech in this House imputed as a crime. But the imputation shall not discourage me. It is a liberty I mean to exercise. No gentleman ought to be afraid to exercise it. *I rejoice that America has resisted.*" The whole House started as though hands had been joined and an electric spark had darted through them all. He repeated the assertion, and went on to show the impolicy of all the proceedings of the late Ministry, adding: —

> "Upon the whole, I will beg leave to tell the House what is really my opinion. It is that the Stamp Act be repealed, absolutely, totally, and immediately; that the reason for the repeal be assigned, because it was founded on an erroneous principle; at the same time let the sovereign authority of this country over the colonies be asserted in as strong terms as can be devised, and be made to extend to every point of legislation, that we may bind their trade, confine their manufactures, and exercise every power whatsoever, except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their consent."

He spoke like a man inspired, and his words swayed events. But the question of the repeal of the Stamp Act was far from being settled. It was argued and reargued, and the question of right came up; only three, or rather Pitt alone, "debated strenuously the rights of America," against more than as many hundred. One long winter night wore away, until four o'clock in the morning, when "the resolution passed for England's right to do what the treasury pleased with three millions of freemen in America." Thus the colonists were henceforward excisable and taxable at the mercy of Parliament.

The spring days were on the wing, and yet the Lords of England were

Hosted by Google

discussing the Repeal Bill. Pitt hobbled into the house on crutches, swathed in flannels, such was his zeal to defend America. He never spoke without fascinating his audience. Edmund Burke won undying fame through his friendship for the colonies. The repeal finally prevailed. On the morning of March 18, the king went in state to Westminster, and gave his assent, among other bills, to what he ever after regarded as the wellspring of all his sorrows, "the fatal repeal of the Stamp Act." He returned amid the shouts and huzzas of the applauding multitude. There was a public dinner of the friends of America in honor of the event; Bow bells were set ringing, and on the Thames the ships displayed their colors. At night a bonfire was kindled and houses illuminated in many parts of the city. March 18.

In the general joy the fact was unnoticed that the king had affixed his seal to the Mutiny Bill, with the objectionable American clauses of the last year; and also to the Act declaratory of the supreme power of Parliament over America in all cases whatsoever.

Swift vessels hurried across the Atlantic with the tidings. On the 20th of May, the news was announced in New York, and the city "ran mad" with gladness. On the 4th of June, the anniversary of the birth of the king, an ox was roasted in the Fields (City Hall Park), twenty-five barrels of strong beer were provided, and a hogshead of rum, with the necessary ingredients for making it into punch. A pole was erected, at the top of which were suspended twenty-five tar-barrels; twenty-five cannon were ranged near by, and, amid the thunder of artillery, and the music of the band playing "God save the King," the standard of England was displayed, greeted by deafening shouts. The jubilee was attended by Sir Henry Moore, by the gentlemen of the council, by the mayor and aldermen of the city, and by the military officers then in New York. May 29. June 4.

Such was the gratitude and good feeling, that at a large gathering shortly after, at the coffee-house, it was resolved to petition the Assembly to cause a statue to be erected to Pitt. John Cruger brought the matter before the House, and it was received with favor. Money was appropriated: but provision was first made for the erection of an equestrian statue of King George III. in bronze, because of his benignity and condescension[1]; the one of Pitt to be in brass. June 23.

It was not long, however, before the chains which had been concealed in the concessions of Great Britain began to show themselves. Sir Henry communicated to the Assembly that he was instructed to enforce the Mutiny Act, which required America to furnish free quarters for the king's

[1] The statue of George III. (by Wilton, the celebrated statuary of London) was erected on the Bowling Green in 1770; that of Hon. William Pitt (by the same artist) in Wall Street, during the same year, in marble, however, instead of brass.

Hosted by Google

troops. This was, in theory, worse than the Stamp Act. It threw the burden upon the colony which chanced to be the headquarters of the army. New York was that colony, and was in the dilemma of submitting immediately and unconditionally to the authority of Parliament or taking the lead in a new career of resistance. The Assembly responded with a limited Supply Bill, which displeased the governor, and which the king refused to receive.

The soldiers in the barracks partook of the spirit of their officers, and were excessively insolent over the triumph of the citizens. On
Aug. 10. the 10th of August they cut down the liberty-pole which had been peaceably erected in June. The next evening a large number of persons assembled to reinstate it. The soldiers hovered about, interrupted proceedings, and finally assaulted the unarmed people with drawn bayonets; the latter retreated, but several were wounded, among whom were Isaac Sears and John Berrien. A complaint was entered, and the case tried before Mayor Cruger. The British officers refused to reprimand their men, but the flagstaff was again erected, without molestation, the military being restrained, as was supposed, by order of the governor. It stood until the 23d of September, when it was again prostrated. Two
Sept. 23. days after, the people met and re-erected it. The soldiers did not interfere; but they vented their ill-nature in so many irritating ways that the Billeting Act never found favor in New York.

The Assembly had been prorogued to the 7th of October, and afterwards to the 6th of November. On the 17th, Governor Moore
Nov. 17. communicated the king's veto of the limited Supply Bill, also the instructions of Lord Shelburne, who emphatically declared that his royal master expected and required obedience to the Acts of the Legislature of Great Britain. It was four weeks before the House replied; and then the tone of its message was very aggravating to the royal govern-
Dec. 15. ment. It had exercised its own discretion, and contributed to the supply of two battalions and one company of artillery, refusing to be "guilty of a breach of trust," by imposing heavier burdens than the people could support.[1] It met the declaration of the supreme power of Parliament by "the principle of the supreme power of the people in all cases whatsoever."

Spring brought fresh disturbances to the metropolis. The anniver-
1767. sary of the repeal of the Stamp Act was celebrated with enthusi-
March 18. asm. As the soldiers could not endure the sight of processions in which they had no part, they stole out at night and cut down the liberty-

[1] Address of the Assembly to Governor Moore, William Nicoll, speaker, delivered December 18, 1766. *Holt's New York Gazette, 1251*, December 24, 1766.

Hosted by Google

pole. The next day the people assembled and erected another, secured with iron bands. No sooner was the city asleep, than the soldiers made an attempt to fell it without success. On the night of the 20th they tried to blow it up with gunpowder, but failed. The citizens resolved to guard the pole on the night of the 21st, and when the soldiers appeared they drove them back. On the night of the 22d the soldiers came out with loaded muskets, and, when near the pole, faced about and fired a volley towards the house where the Sons of Liberty held their meetings. Two balls took effect in the building; one passed through it, and another lodged in the timbers. This daring outrage brought out the commander of the forces, who ordered the soldiers to retire.

March 20. March 21. March 22.

George III. and his Lords denounced New York as "rebellious." America was the theme in all companies, social and political. The freedom of the New York press, the action of the New York Assembly, the defiant attitude of the Sons of Liberty, and the petition of the New York merchants, provoked universal apprehension. The latter (just received) was temperate in expression, but it enumerated some of the useless grievances of the Acts of Trade, and prayed for the free exportation of lumber, and an easier exchange of products with the West Indies. It was read by one and another, and interpreted as fresh evidence that nothing would give satisfaction to the colonies but a repeal of all restrictions on trade, and freedom from all subordination and dependence. The king talked more than ever. He was oblivious to every consideration of wisdom and expediency. He told Shelburne that the time had come when the laws must be enforced. But Parliament was in a desperate conflict within itself. Rockingham declared that neither he nor his friends would join in anything severe against America. Pitt was in the country, broken in health, and his eclipse encouraged the wonderful and volatile Townshend, whose ruling passion was present success, to devise schemes of personal ambition. He could never resist applause, and was sure to pay the greatest court wherever political appearances were the most inviting. He dictated to the Ministry. His brilliant oratory took inspiration from passing events. "Are we to pay infinite taxes and the colonies none?" he asked. "Are we to be burdened that they may be eased?"

News came that Massachusetts through her Legislature had given a formal defiance to Parliament, and was lending her influence to sustain New York in resisting the Billeting Act. On the 30th, the Lords wearied themselves all day in scolding at the colonies with indiscriminate bitterness; and the next day, and the next. It was proposed by some to make New York an example that might terrify all the others. "If we do not act with vigor," cried Townshend, "the colonies will very soon be lost forever."

March 28. March 30.

Hosted by Google

Plan after plan was discussed. Day after day wore away. On the
May 13. 13th of May, Townshend entered the House of Commons with the air of a man of business. By special order the doors were closed against every agent of the colonies and every American merchant. He opened the debate with an appearance of candor; the colonies had all been refractory, but New York had added impudence. He proposed to proceed against New York, and New York alone. He moved that New York, having directly disobeyed Parliament, should be deprived of the power of legislation until submission was secured.

Taking advantage of the anarchy in the Ministry, he perfected a bill, and, in the course of a few weeks, pushed it through both Houses, by which New York was disfranchised. At the same time he introduced a new system of taxation, which stung the colonies into rash words and rasher proceedings. Duties were tacked upon articles of the first necessity, a Board of Customs established in Boston, Writs of Assistance legalized, some of the colonial charters abrogated because the people enjoyed too much freedom under them, an independent support provided for the crown officers, and places henceforward to be filled by men born in England, who were willing to exact implicit obedience from the Americans.

The New York Assembly, foreseeing the storm, and without recognizing the binding force of the British statute, conformed so far to its provisions as to appropriate a sum of money for the use of the army, without specifications, and then continued in the exercise of its powers as if nothing had happened. This partial concession created violent divisions, the governor esteeming it a politic dodge, and the radical Sons of Liberty determining to resist unto the bitter end; when, therefore, the Assembly was dissolved (its septennial limitation having expired) in
1768. February, 1768, a hotly contested election followed. The city
Feb. 11. members chosen were, James Jauncey, Philip Livingston, Jacob Walton, and James De Lancey. The latter was at the time in England.

Just as the news of Townshend's high-handed measures was driving the merchants of this continent into non-importation agreements more binding than ever, and the Sons of Liberty into secret and startling pledges, the author himself fell a victim to fever, and closed his eyes upon the confusion he had created on both sides of the water, leaving to his successors the fatal bequest of errors which could never be retrieved. Boston suffered the more keenly, and threatened the more loudly. The ladies organized an association to relinquish tea, and the whole community voted to forbear the use of any of the taxable articles. But months elapsed before a ship arrived laden with goods that were dutiable. The Ministry was undergoing a revolution. And by the time matters were

Hosted by Google

comparatively settled at the Court of George III., an "insurrection" in Boston was represented as so imminent that troops were sent to preserve order and assist the officers of the revenue.

The merchants of New York met and resolved to sustain the action of the merchants and inhabitants of Boston. Governor Moore thought such proceedings had an evil tendency, but his counselors held that they were strictly legal: the people had undoubtedly a right to establish among themselves certain rules of economy; being masters of their own property, they might dispose of it as they pleased.[1]

It was during this exciting period that a few of the leading merchants of New York met and organized the Chamber of Commerce, the first mercantile society in America. John Cruger was chosen President, Hugh Wallace,[2] Vice-President, Elias Desbrosses, Treasurer,[3] and Anthony Van Dam, Secretary. In 1770, the permanent existence of this institution was secured through a charter from the crown. Isaac Low[4] made the motion (December 5, 1769) which resulted in its incorporation. He was an importer who for a long period seems to have had a monopoly of the fur trade with the Indians, and an able and influential citizen. The committee of merchants who, accompanied by the President, John Cruger, waited upon Lieutenant-Governor Colden with the carefully prepared draft of a charter and a petition to be invested with such powers and authorities as would best promote the commercial and

April 5.

[1] *Moore to Hillsborough*, May 12, 1768. *Bancroft*, VI. 150.

[2] Hugh and Alexander Wallace, brothers, were merchants of wealth and position. They married sisters, the daughters of Cornelius Low of Raritan, New Jersey. Hugh, the elder, was chosen President of the Chamber of Commerce after Mr. Cruger's retirement in 1770. He was also appointed to the Council. His mansion upon Dock Street was the resort of the great dignitaries of the province, and his manner of life was costly and elegant. He remained in New York during the Revolution, and retired to England with the army in 1783.

[3] The Desbrosses family were of Huguenot extraction. Elias Desbrosses was a religious man, and prominent in every charitable enterprise. But he does not seem to have taken part in the angry scenes of the period. He remained in the city during the Revolution, untroubled by the armies on either side, and was very much loved and respected by the community. He was the third President of the Chamber of Commerce. His name is perpetuated by the street and ferry upon the west side of the city.

[4] The Lows were a family who had had their representatives in New York for more than a century. Cornelius Low, the son of Cornelius Low, was born in New York City in 1700, and married, in 1729, Johanna Gouverneur. Isaac Low was their son, born, in 1731, at Raritan, New Jersey. (It was his sisters who married the brothers Hugh and Alexander Wallace.) He married the daughter of Cornelius Cuyler, Mayor of Albany, the niece and companion of Mrs. Schuyler; she was pronounced "a beauty" by the critical John Adams when he breakfasted with them in their elegant home on Dock Street in 1774. The sister of Mrs. Isaac Low was Mrs. Van Cortlandt, of Cortlandt Manor. **Isaac Low was the seventh President of the Chamber of Commerce, from 1775 to 1783.**

Hosted by Google

landed interests of the colony,[1] were: Isaac Low, William Walton, John Alsop,[2] Charles McEvers, William McAdam, Sampson Simpson, Thomas Buchanan,[3] Richard Sharpe, and John Thurman. This notable incident, which had such a bearing upon the future prosperity of New York, occurred early in the following March. Colden received the delegation graciously, and replied: —

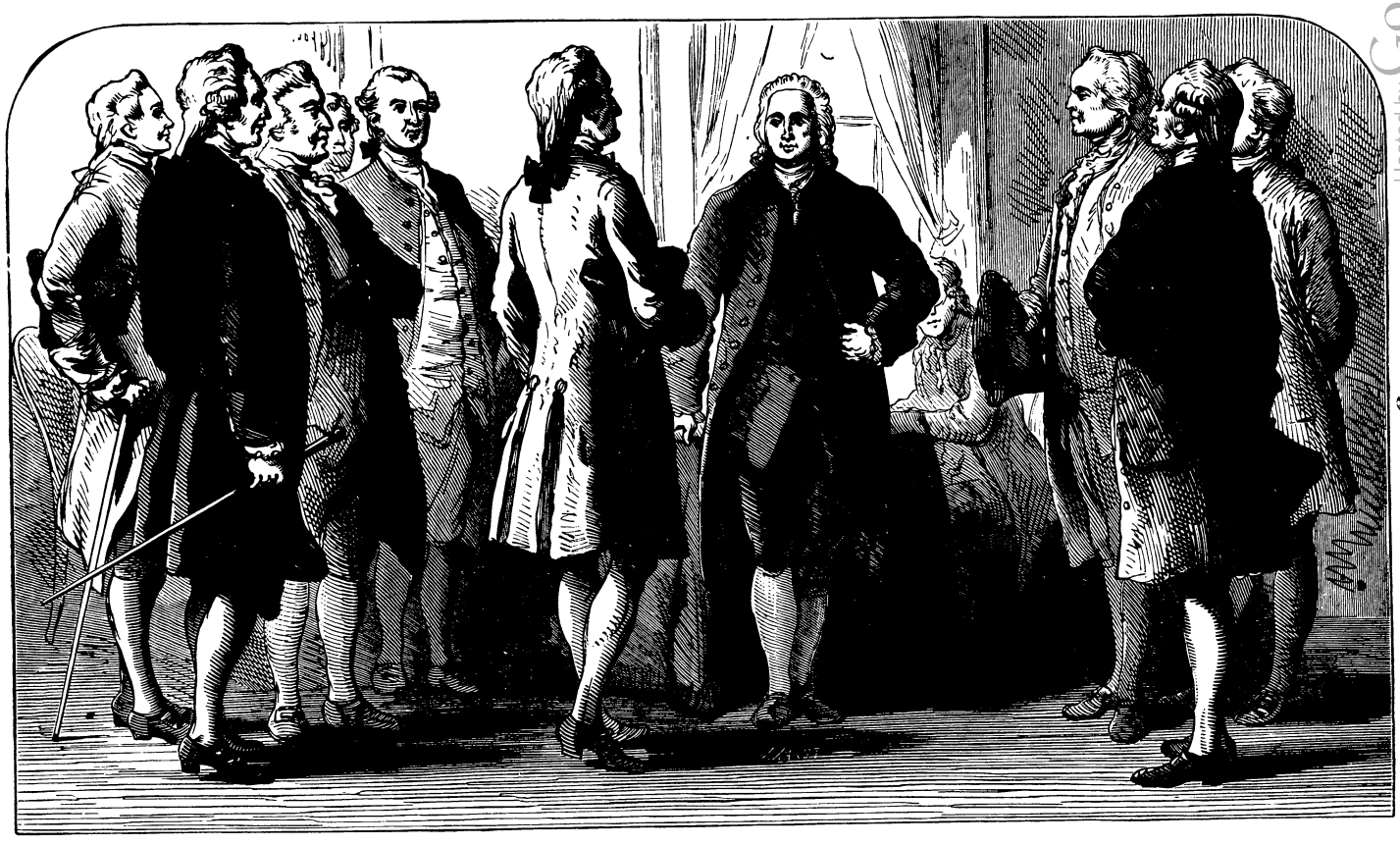
"I think it a good institution, and will always be glad to promote the commercial interests of this city; and shall deem it a peculiar happiness

[1] *Chamber of Commerce Records*, 1768 – 1784, pp. 73, 77, 79, 89 – 97.

[2] John Alsop was the elder son of John Alsop and Abigail Sackett, and grandson of Richard Alsop, who came from England near the close of the seventeenth century, and settled in Newtown, Long Island. He was an importing merchant, and had accumulated a handsome fortune. His brother Richard, who was at one time his partner, but who afterwards removed to Middletown, Connecticut, was trained to business in the counting-house of Philip Livingston. He (John Alsop) took an active part in the patriotic measures of the merchants; was in 1770 one of the Committee of Inspection to enforce the non-importation agreements; was in 1774 one of the Committee of Fifty-One chosen to unite the colonies in measures of resistance, and the same year was chosen delegate to the first Continental Congress. He was one of the Committee of One Hundred, and elected to the Congress of 1775. He resigned his seat on the Declaration of Independence, and retired with his family to Middletown, Connecticut. He returned to New York after the war, and was an active and useful member of society until his death in 1794. His only child married Hon. Rufus King. Among his distinguished descendants may be mentioned the Hon. John Alsop King, formerly Governor of the State of New York; Hon. Charles King, LL. D., late President of Columbia College; and Hon. James Gore King (the banker), who was President of the Chamber of Commerce in 1845 and 1848. The name of Alsop is honorably sustained by the descendants of his brother, Richard Alsop.

[3] Thomas Buchanan was of the ancient and distinguished family of Buchanan of Buchanan, a clan which held a prominent place in the annals of Scotland. His father, George Buchanan, was a gentleman of fortune, liberally educated, and his mother, Jean Lowden, was a lady of gentle birth. Their home was in Glasgow. Thomas was educated at the University of Glasgow, but came to New York before he had completed his nineteenth year. Tradition says that although he became a partner with one of his relatives of the same name in a mercantile house engaged in a foreign and domestic trade of considerable magnitude, that he had no intention of becoming a permanent resident of New York, until he fell in love with Almy, daughter of Jacob Townsend, of Oyster Bay, Long Island, a lady of great personal attractions; in 1765 they were married. The family of his wife were closely identified with the cause of the colonies, but as he was not American born he was enabled to pursue an independent course in the struggle, and retained the esteem of both the Americans and the British. He was one of the famous Committee of One Hundred chosen to take control of the city in 1775; and he was one of the signers of the loyal address to Lord and General Howe in September, 1776. He built a dwelling-house on Wall Street on the site of the present Custom House, and its grounds extended to Sloat Lane, where his warehouse was located; he lived here until his death, in 1815. He was a promoter of public institutions and charities, and filled many offices of responsibility and commercial trust. He was buried in his family vault in the Wall Street Presbyterian Church. He left eight children: of these, Almy married Peter P. Goelet; Margaret married Robert R. Goelet; Martha married Thomas Hicks, son of Whitehead Hicks, Mayor of New York; Elizabeth married Samuel Gilford; Frances married Thomas C. Pearsall. Mr. Buchanan's only son died unmarried.

Hosted by Google



"Colden received the delegation graciously, and replied: 'I think it a good institution, and will always be glad to promote the commercial interests of this city, and shall deem it a peculiar happiness that a society so beneficial to the general good of the province is incorporated during my administration.'" *Page 740.*

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

that a society so beneficial to the general good of the province is incorporated during my administration."

Twelve months afterward a committee of merchants waited upon the lieutenant-governor to request him to sit for his picture at the expense of the Chamber, which, when painted, should be hung in the great hall of the institution, in grateful appreciation of the advantages conferred by the royal charter. The work was duly accomplished, — a life-size portrait, — which, after many vicissitudes, having escaped perils by sword and by fire, now graces in all the dignity of its centennial years the honorable place to which it was originally destined.

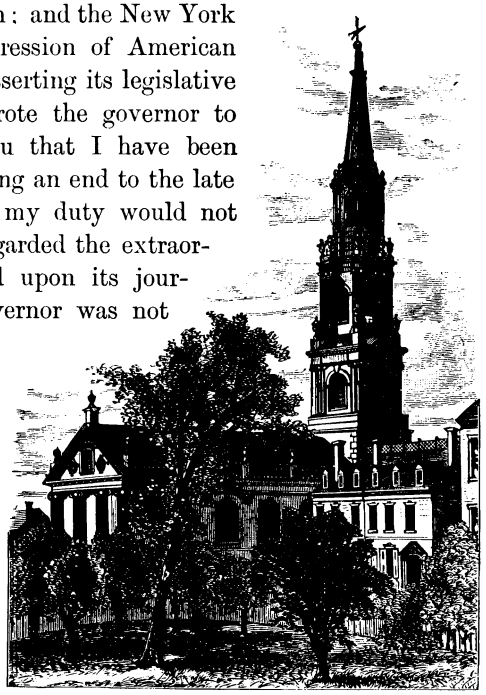
And the citizens of New York found time, in the midst of agitations and revolutionary gossip, to concentrate interest upon a college commencement. The public exercises of the spring of 1768 drew together an unusually large, intelligent, and fashionable audience. The graduates on this occasion were Benjamin Moore, afterwards Bishop Moore; John Stevens, Gouverneur Morris, whose oration won great applause, Gulian Verplanck, Egbert Benson, James Ludlow, Peter Van Schaick, Charles Doughty, and John Beardsley. They were all distinguished men at a later day. Benjamin Moore and Gouverneur Morris were presented with silver medals. The latter possessed an inordinate amount of self-confidence for one of his age (he was born in 1752), and shortly began to write anonymous papers on the grave questions of finance and taxation. He studied law under the careful direction of William Smith, the historian, and was admitted to practice before he was twenty years old. He developed the traits of character so marked in his ancestry, — energy, persistence, and independent fearlessness, — but, unlike his father and grandfather, he commenced his career without fortune, knowing that his future success depended upon his own efforts; a legacy of two thousand pounds, to be paid after his mother's death, was all he had to expect from his father's estate. He had the advantage of the family name, as well as that of a fair, pleasing face and a fine voice, and was remarkably industrious. One of the early important causes in which he was engaged was that of a contested election in Westchester County, where John Jay was his opponent. It involved principles of evidence, questions about the right of suffrage, and matters local and general, which gave scope for the display of no little legal learning and forensic ability.

The new year opened gloomily. Although England was afraid to strike, every effort was being made to intimidate the colonies. Boston was in disgrace; that is, soldiers paraded her streets while as yet nothing was given them to do. Boston had not rebelled 1758.

Hosted by Google

neither was Boston subdued by the military display. The first attempt to enforce the taxes would tell the story, and even Lord North hesitated.

New York continued to send messages of sympathy to Boston; and the New York Assembly completed the expression of American opinion, by unanimously asserting its legislative rights. "I am very sorry," wrote the governor to Hillsborough, "to inform you that I have been under the necessity of putting an end to the late Assembly by a dissolution; my duty would not permit me to pass over unregarded the extraordinary resolves it had entered upon its journals."[1] In this action the governor was not cordially supported by his Council, — of the eight members four stood directly opposed.



St. Paul's Chapel.

The new election occasioned intense excitement. Every means and device was used to secure votes. "I hear," wrote Sir William Johnson, to a friend in New York, "that you are likely to have a hot time at the polls, and probably there will be work for shillalahs."

Some of the incidents show how trifles were turned to advantage on this occasion; it was reported that a certain gentleman had said that "the Irish were poor beggars, and had come over upon a bunch of straw." The whole body of Irishmen immediately joined and appeared with straws in their hats. Another person was said to have remarked that "the Germans were like firebrands." They at once resolved to vote with firebrands in their hands. Being dissuaded, they distinguished themselves by the name of *Firebrands*. This was the last Assembly ever elected under the crown. The contest in the city was between the Church of England party and the Presbyterians, — the former being led by the De Lanceys and the latter by the Livingstons with almost as much acrimony as ten years previously. The church party, having the support of the mercantile and masonic interests, were triumphant. The city members were, John Cruger, James De Lancey, Jacob Walton, and

[1] *Moore to Hillsborough*, January 4, 1769.

Hosted by Google

James Jauncey. "James De Lancey takes the lead," wrote John Watts, "and must continue to do so as long as he manages with common wisdom, his father's memory is so much revered." The House met April 4, and John Cruger was chosen speaker. On motion of Philip Livingston, a vote of thanks was returned to the merchants, for their repeated, disinterested, public-spirited, and patriotic conduct in declining the importation of goods from Great Britain until such acts of Parliament, as the General Assembly of New York had declared unconstitutional and subversive of the rights and liberties of the people of this colony, should be repealed.[1] And it is more than probable that the resolves which caused the dissolution of the former Assembly would have been emphatically renewed, but that Philip Livingston was dismissed, after violent debates, on the ground of non-residence, he having been elected from the manor when his home was in the city.

April 4.

April 10.

"The Livingstons are not entirely crushed," wrote Hugh Wallace, "for it is said that he will be returned again and again, and so become another Wilkes." Judge Robert R. Livingston lost his seat as a member, because of a new law which rendered the office of judge and representative incompatible. Governor Moore regretted this exceedingly, as he entertained a high opinion of the judicial gentleman. He wrote at once to the Lords, recommending him as counselor in the place of Lord Stirling, who had resigned on account of his New Jersey estates, and his connection with the New Jersey Council. He described Judge Livingston as a man of great ability and many accomplishments. He said, "his father (who is very far advanced in years) is possessed of a great landed estate, which will come to him undivided, as he is an only son, and he is married to the richest heiress in this country, whose father, Colonel Henry Beekman, is likewise very old and infirm; so in all human probability he must shortly become the greatest landholder, without any exception, in New York."

As the summer advanced, the English Lords, palsied by indecision, began to discuss repeals. They finally agreed that the duties on glass, paper, and painters' colors were contrary to the true principles of commerce. But the tax on tea must be maintained as an evidence of lordly superiority. The New York merchants, who had originated non-importation, and carried it rigidly into effect, which was not true of any other colony, invited Boston to extend the agreement against importing until *every Act* imposing duties should be repealed.

Meanwhile the effects of the Non-Importation Acts were alarming in savage New York. The scarcity of goods at the trading-posts led the Six

[1] *Journals of the Assembly; Chamber of Commerce Records.*

Hosted by Google

Nations, who could not comprehend the policy through which these acts were dictated, to imagine that the king and colonists had conspired to restrict their trade. Sir William Johnson called a congress of sachems, but no Indian goods suitable for presents could be found. One large package designed especially for this purpose, and consigned to a merchant in Albany, was seized in New York on its way to the consignee, by the Sons of Liberty, who were carrying out the non-importation agreement with commendable vigor. It nearly produced the complication which would have ended in another bloody Indian war.

The imports of New York had fallen off more than five parts in six. The merchants were becoming impatient of a system of voluntary renunciation which was so unequally kept; the belief was common that if the other colonies had adhered to it as strictly, all the grievances would have been redressed. The policy of importing all goods except tea, was broached, and met with favor. It was violently opposed by Sears, MacDougall, Lamb, and others of the radical popular party; but men went from ward to ward to take the opinions of the people, and it was found that eleven hundred and eighty, against three hundred, were disposed to confine the restriction to tea alone. The Sons of Liberty throughout the colonies raised a howl of disapprobation. Patriotism, they said, was on the decline. But the New York merchants argued from a broader standpoint than has been generally supposed. They had originated and alone sacredly enforced the non-importation agreement, and it was reacting dangerously upon the savage population. Concessions had been made by the mother country, however inadequate, and circumstances justified the taking advantage of those concessions. Before the middle of July, 1770, a packet sailed for England with orders for all kinds of merchandise except TEA.

Prior to this important event, the sudden death of Sir Henry Moore, (September 11, 1769), after an illness of three weeks, threw the reins of government once more into the hands of the aged Lieutenant-Governor Colden. The indolence, courteous address, and genial disposition of Moore, had secured the cordial good-will of even his bitterest political opponents, but the most trifling acts of Colden were liable to misconstruction through his previous unpopularity.

The latter met the Assembly in November, demanding a further subsidy for the troops. There was no immediate response. The House had persistently refused to pay for the burnt chariot, and other losses sustained by Colden in the time of the Stamp Act riot. But the want of pronounced relief in the shape of currency had for a long time been gravely discussed. A bill was shortly introduced for the emission of bills of

Hosted by Google

credit to the amount of one hundred and twenty thousand pounds, to be loaned to the people, and the interest applied to the support of the government. And on the 15th of December a motion was made to grant two thousand pounds of the interest arising from the loan bill, when it should become a law, towards the support of the troops, which turned the scale and induced Colden to approve the questionable bill, even at the risk of Parliamentary displeasure. Dec. 15.

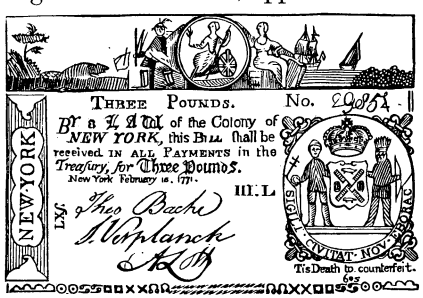
The next day an inflammatory handbill threw New York into confusion. It was addressed "*To the* BETRAYED *inhabitants of the city and colony of* NEW YORK," and was signed "A Son of Liberty." It warned the people against this "subtle attack upon their liberties," and declared it a corrupt and infamous combination between a powerful family (referring to the De Lanceys) and the lieutenant-governor, to compel submission to the Mutiny Act; and concluded by calling a popular meeting in the Fields. The next day a large multitude assembled. John Lamb explained the object of the meeting in a spirited address, and put the question whether "the people would approve the doings of the Legislature." The vote for disapproval appeared unanimous, and Lamb was appointed chairman of a committee of seven, to report the same to the House. They were received courteously, but the Legislature did not esteem it worth while to be dictated to by a meeting which partook so apparently of the character of a mob. Resolutions were immediately passed, condemning the handbill as a seditious and infamous libel, and £100 was offered for the detection of the writer. Following these resolutions, appeared a second handbill signed "LEGION," which was submitted to the House by James De Lancey. It was condemned, like its predecessors, and £50 offered for its author. Lamb was summoned to the Assembly rooms, under suspicion, and interrogated. The committee, however, of which he was chairman, signified that each and all were implicated to the same extent as Lamb, and he was dismissed. The passage of the bill was, in substance, the germ of bank legislation. These bills of credit were made legal tender in all dues to the government, and possessed the essential character of the treasury notes of the present day. They were issued by officers appointed by the governor and council. It was supposed they would lighten the burden of taxation by funishing a circulating medium.

Dec. 16.

Dec. 17.

Dec. 18.

Dec. 19.



Specimen of Bills.

1770. Jan. 4.

Digitized by Google

The soldiers had long writhed under the contempt with which they had been treated by the Sons of Liberty, and only waited for an opportunity to return scorn with interest. Now that supplies were granted, the officers ceased to restrain them through policy, as hitherto. Hence an attack was planned upon the detested liberty-pole. A portion of the
Jan. 13. Sixteenth Regiment came out in the night, bored off its supporters, and attempted to blow it up with gunpowder. A knot of men having gathered while they were thus engaged, they were charged upon with fixed bayonets, and driven into a tavern kept by La Montagne, the well-known rendezvous of the Sons of Liberty. They attempted to defend themselves, but the soldiers broke the windows and doors and demolished the furniture. Finally, an officer appeared and ordered the soldiers to the
Jan. 16. barracks. Three nights afterward the destruction of the pole was accomplished, and its fragments piled in front of La Montagne's door.

Incensed beyond endurance, three thousand citizens assembled next morning at the scene of the outrage. Resolutions were adopted,
Jan. 17. among which was one to the effect that all soldiers found armed in the streets after roll-call, should be treated as "enemies to the peace of the city." A committee of the Sons of Liberty were appointed to enforce the Resolutions. The next morning insolent placards were
Jan. 18. found posted in various parts of the city, ridiculing the action of the citizens. Later in the day, Sears and one or two others caught three soldiers in the act of posting more of these handbills, and collared and marched them towards the mayor's office. They were met by a band of some twenty soldiers, who attempted to rescue their fellows. An affray ensued, the soldiers striking the citizens indiscriminately with cutlasses and clubs, and they defending themselves as best they could, with canes, cart-stakes, and such weapons as lay within their reach. The latter gaining advantage, the military retreated towards Golden Hill;[1] at this point they were met by a reinforcement, and about to make a furious charge upon the citizens, when officers appeared and ordered the men to the barracks. Thus the riot was quelled. But several persons had been wounded and one killed. The next day there was a skirmish both
Jan. 19. morning and afternoon.[2] The city was thrown into the wildest commotion, the bells rang, and the news, with exaggerations and embel-

[1] That portion of John Street between Cliff Street and Burling Slip. This was called the "Battle of Golden Hill." Thus was the first blood of the Revolution shed in New York, two months before the massacre in King's Street, Boston, and five years before the Battle of Lexington.

[2] "On Saturday there was another battle between the inhabitants and soldiers; but the soldiers met with rubbers, the chiefest part being sailors with clubs who were determined to

Hosted by Google

lishments, spread through the country with the swiftness of lightning. On the 20th the mayor issued a proclamation forbidding the soldiers to leave the barracks unless accompanied by a non-commissioned officer, and order was once more restored. The newspapers loudly celebrated the victory; and the Sons of Liberty bought a piece of land on the western border of the commons, and erected another pole, with "Liberty and Property" inscribed thereon.[1] Jan. 20. Feb. 6.

About the same time MacDougal was arrested, on the accusation of the printer and his journeyman, as the author of the libelous handbills in December. "He is a person of some fortune, and could easily have found the bail required of him," wrote Colden to the Earl of Hillsborough, "but he chose to go to jail, and he lies there imitating Wilkes in everything he can." He was at once toasted as a martyr, and was visited by such throngs in his prison that he was obliged to appoint hours for their reception. His case bore sufficient analogy to the Wilkes-and-liberty madness which had so recently raged in England as to cause "Forty-five" to be adopted as the watchword and countersign of the popular party. The Sons of Liberty drank forty-five toasts at a dinner given in honor of the Repeal Act, and afterwards marched in procession to the jail, and saluted MacDougal with forty-five cheers. On the forty-fifth day of the year, forty-five of the Liberty boys went in procession to the jail, and dined with him on forty-five beefsteaks cut from a bullock forty-five months old, after which they drank forty-five toasts. Such was the spirit of the times. Feb. 8. March 19.

MacDougal was indicted by the grand jury for having published a libel against the government. He was not arraigned before the Assembly until December. He was defended by George Clinton, afterwards governor, and a writ of habeas corpus issued. But although the indictment was not tried, the main witness for the prosecution (Parker) dying about that time, MacDougal was not liberated from his confinement until the 4th of March, 1771, when the Assembly was prorogued.[2]

revenge the death of their brother, which they did with courage, and made the soldiers all run to their barracks. One man got his skull cut in the most cruel manner. What will be the end of this God knows."— *Extract from Letter from New York*, January 22, 1770, in the British Evening Post, March 15, 1770.

[1] This pole was near the site of the old one, opposite the present 252 Broadway, between Warren and Murray Streets.

[2] Major-General Alexander MacDougal was, in March, 1775, a member of the provincial convention; he received the same year a commission as colonel of the first New York regiment. In 1776 he rose to the rank of brigadier-general; in 1777, to major-general; and in 1778, superseded Putnam in command of the Highlands. After the flight of Arnold he was placed in charge of West Point. With the return of peace he was elected to the Legislature of the State. He was also president of the Bank of New York at the time of his death, in June, 1786.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXX.

1770-1775.

THE BEGINNING OF THE GREAT STRUGGLE.

CONDITION OF NEW YORK IN 1770. — DIVISIONS AMONG THE PEOPLE. — THE LIVINGSTON AND DE LANCEY FAMILIES. — RELIGIOUS AND STATE MATTERS. — THE CHURCHES OF NEW YORK IN 1770. — THE PASTORS. — RESENTMENT OF BOSTON WHEN NEW YORK RESUMED COMMERCIAL INTERCOURSE WITH ENGLAND. — REPLY OF THE NEW YORK MERCHANTS. — TWO YEARS' TRANQUILLITY. — THE EARL OF DUNMORE. — SIR WILLIAM TRYON. — THE COURT END OF THE TOWN. — BRIEF ALLUSION TO THE LOCATION OF THE DWELLINGS OF SOME OF THE LEADING FAMILIES OF THE CITY. — A GLIMPSE OF THE SUGAR-HOUSES. — DISTRESS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY. — ACT OF PARLIAMENT TO FORCE THE COLONIES TO BUY TEA. — THE BOSTON TEA PARTY. — THE NEW YORK TEA MEETING. — NEW YORK SENDING BACK THE TEA VESSELS. — THE BOSTON PORT BILL. — SYMPATHY OF THE COLONIES. — THE COMMITTEE OF FIFTY-ONE. — NEW YORK PROPOSES A CONTINENTAL CONGRESS. — VARIOUS EXCITING EVENTS. — THE DELEGATES TO THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS. — ACTION OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS OF 1774. — THE NEW YORK COMMITTEE OF OBSERVATION. — PROVISION FOR THE IMMORTAL CONGRESS WHICH DECLARED THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA.

NEW YORK at this period, like England herself, was afflicted with excess of aristocracy. The same pride and arrogance which ruled in the palace, and which tinged the whole administration of Great Britain, were stamped upon the central colony, and biased the judgments of the very men who professed the most liberal notions. New York was a nest of families. Nearly all who figured in the councils of the colony were related to each other by blood or marriage. Feuds were their inheritance, having been handed along from generation to generation. Thus the forces which constitute antagonisms were strikingly developed. Private quarrels burned fiercely just beneath the surface of politics, and innumerable theories evolved from the varying conditions and wants of a growing community fanned the flames. The idea of right prevailed. It was the life-giving principle which was to result in a durable constitution. But conflicting opinions distorted the idea. Some clung to the bequests of the past with obstinate tenacity; others clamored for reform. There were fanatics for conservatism, and fanatics for ideal freedom. Men of

Hosted by Google

property were dismayed with the aspirations of ignorance and incapacity; and the tradesmen and mechanics suspected the wealthier class of enmity to popular power. The merchants were not in sympathy with either; they were the chief sufferers through the pretensions of England, and were suspicious of all who were in a position to be won by the distributions of contracts or commissions, and at the same time were afraid of the rashness of the multitude which might plunge them at any moment into the miseries of a desperate conflict. The aristocracy which the system of manorial grants had created was divided against itself. The two great leading families, Livingston and De Lancey, were, if possible, more widely separated than ever. The Livingstons inclined to republicanism in any event. The De Lanceys pinned their faith to kingly power.

Religious and state matters were closely allied. The Episcopal was arrayed against the Presbyterian Church, and the Dutch-Reformed was jealous of the Congregational; both the Episcopal and the Dutch-Reformed were alarmed by the leveling cloud which seemed to hang low above their heads. New York, as we have seen, was far from being English, although under England's rule. Its people were a union of different races. Neither had events of the past few years tended towards an increase of respect for English institutions. Now it was predicted that George III. would shortly place a prelate over every colony. The dread of absolute power in a spiritual order was nearly as great as in 1689. Hence the violent opposition to the Church of England which the officers of the government pronounced "an effort to excite tumult and anarchy." Of the various churches of the city at this point in our history a few brief descriptive passages will no doubt prove acceptable to the reader.

Trinity, the parish church of the Episcopalians, had, as a collegiate charge, St. George's and St. Paul's Chapel. The latter was new (having been erected in 1767 [1]). It was a costly structure of reddish-gray sandstone, ornamented and finished in the most elaborate manner. The galleries were supported by massive pillars, and two great square pews about midway upon either side of the edifice were specially designed for the dignitaries of state. The excellent Rev. Dr. Barclay finished his labors in 1764, since which time Rev. Dr. Samuel Auchmuty had been rector of the church. He was the son of Robert Auchmuty, an eminent Boston lawyer, who descended from an ancient Scotch baronial family.[2] The assistant rector was Rev. Charles Inglis, afterwards Bishop of Nova Scotia.

[1] See sketch of St. Paul's Chapel, page 740.

[2] Robert, the brother of Rev. Dr. Samuel Auchmuty, was the famous and witty Boston advocate, who, with Adams and Quincy, defended Captain Preston and the British soldiers

Hosted by Google

The North Dutch, the fourth in the succession of Dutch churches, was first opened for worship May 25, 1769, and was the rival in architectural pretensions of St. Paul's Chapel. It was located on Fulton (Fair) Street, then quite out of town.[1] The Rev. Dr. John Henry Livingston was called to the pulpit the next year. He was young, scarcely twenty-six years of age, of singular personal beauty, tall, athletic, and a proficient in manly exercises. He had been graduated from Yale at sixteen, after a rigorous examination not only in the classics, but astronomy, mathematics, and jurisprudence; and he had traveled over Europe, studied theology in Utrecht, Holland, and been ordained by the Classis of Amsterdam. He was the great-grandson of Robert Livingston, the first lord of the manor, his grandfather being Gilbert, and his father Henry Livingston. He married (in 1775) his third cousin, Sarah, the beautiful daughter of Philip Livingston of New York City.[2] His gifts were of a high order, and his influence was soon to be felt in the evolutions of the political wheel. His distinguished associate, Rev. Dr. Laidlie of the



North Dutch Church.
(On Fulton Street.)

engaged in the Boston massacre; he was Judge of Admiralty from 1767 to 1776. Their sister married Benjamin Pratt of New York. One of the sons of Rev. Dr. Samuel Auchmuty (Sir Samuel Auchmuty) became a general in the British army and was subsequently knighted; he was, in 1822, commander-in-chief of the forces in Ireland.

[1] The North Dutch Church was remodeled in 1842, and taken down in 1875; it was celebrated for many years as the seat of the Fulton Street prayer-meetings.

[2] Philip Livingston removed his family to Kingston in 1775. His eldest daughter married Stephen Van Rensselaer of Albany; his second daughter married Dr. Thomas Jones of New York, and was the mother of the wife of De Witt Clinton; his son, Henry Philip, was a member of Washington's family in 1778.

Hosted by Google

Middle Dutch Church, was already infusing Scotch prejudices and republican philosophy into the minds of a large and intelligent congregation.

The Presbyterians had about the same time found their one church in Wall Street inadequate to the requirements of the organization, and built the brick church (in 1768) on the corner of Beekman Street and Park Row. The lot was donated by the corporation. The chief agitator of the movement was Rev. Dr. John Rodgers, who had been the pastor of the Wall Street Church since 1765. He even went about in person to obtain subscriptions for the new edifice. He was a progressive divine. It was he who abolished the custom which had hitherto prevailed of opening Sabbath services from the clerk's desk. He was fond of scholastic theology, and by no means averse to political economy. He entered into the bitter controversies of the period with fearless enthusiasm. His whole soul was in rebellion, as it were, with what he styled the "overbearing spirit of the Episcopalians." He, like Rev. Dr. Auchmuty, was a native of Boston.[1] But he was educated in Philadelphia, whither his parents had removed in 1728. He had been converted in the great revival that swept over the country in 1748, under the preaching of Whitfield, and had labored as a missionary in Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, before settling in New York. He was fixed in habits of austere industry, and never lost a moment of time. Such was the crowded condition of the Wall Street Church that when the Brick Church was completed all the pews were taken at the first sale. The congregation was one body with that which worshiped in Wall Street; there was but one board of trustees, one eldership, and one ministry. Failing, however, as hitherto in the matter of obtaining a charter, through the violent collision of parties in the Assembly, and the persistent opposition of the Episcopalians, the property was vested with trustees. William Livingston and John Morin Scott, who were known as the "Presbyterian lawyers," were conspicuous members of Dr. Rodgers's flock. They were already wielding their gifted and caustic pens in the significant direction of a free and independent national existence, the system of which to-day so nearly resembles in its order and strength that of the church government of this denomination.

It was in 1768 that Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon reached America to take charge of Princeton College. He had long been a correspondent of

[1] Rev. Dr. John Rodgers was born in Boston, August 5, 1727. He succeeded the eminent Rev. David Bostwick in the Wall Street Church, who died in 1763. He died in New York City, May 7, 1811. During the War of the Revolution he officiated as chaplain of Heath's brigade, of the State Convention, of the Council of Safety, and of the first Legislature. He also preached from time to time at various places in the country.

Hosted by Google

Dr. Rodgers, by whom he was cordially welcomed and entertained upon his arrival in New York. He was intensely opposed to prelacy, and claimed with magnetic eloquence a fuller degree of liberty in matters of religious faith and practice. His attention was almost immediately called to a special bone of contention. A legacy of seven hundred and fifty dollars had been left the Wall Street Church in 1754, the interest to be applied to the support of the poor children of the congregation. A legal difficulty had arisen concerning the transfer of the fund, the party having it in charge refusing to deliver it to the church because of the want of chartered responsibility. Thus for a series of years the church was denied the benefit of the gift; and to add to the acrimony between the two ecclesiastical bodies, the vestry of Trinity Church made a succession of efforts to obtain the fund. President Witherspoon was fresh from the discussion of similar topics in the Old World; he was learned, versatile, and brilliant, and gave free expression to his views. He denounced the course of the Church of England, and criticised the acts of the king and his Ministry in language so direct and forcible that even his hearers oftentimes trembled. He was the son of the parish minister of Yester, near Edinburgh, Scotland, and a lineal descendant of John Knox.[1] When the Pretender landed in Scotland, he marched at the head of a company of militia to Glasgow to join him; he was taken prisoner at the battle of Falkirk, and remained in Donne Castle until after the battle of Culloden. He was settled in Paisley in 1757, where he preached until he was called to the presidency of Princeton College.

The Scotch Presbyterian Church had been founded in 1757 through a disagreement in the Wall Street Church concerning a system of Psalmody. A few members seceded, and in 1761 called Rev. Dr. John Mason[2] from

[1] Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon was born February 5, 1722. He died near Princeton, New Jersey, November 15, 1794. In addition to his duties as President of Princeton College, he lectured on moral philosophy and rhetoric, was professor of divinity, and pastor of the church in Princeton. He wrote extensively on a great variety of topics, and took an active leading part in the proceedings which culminated in the Revolution. He served on many important committees, was a member of the convention to frame a State constitution for New Jersey, and was sent by the Provincial to the General Congress at Philadelphia, where he signed the Declaration of Independence.

[2] Rev. Dr. John Mason was born in 1734. He died in New York, April 19, 1792. His son, Rev. John Mitchell Mason, D. D., born in New York, March 19, 1770, and educated in Scotland, succeeded to the pulpit, and attained, if possible, greater eminence than his father. His eloquence was historical. His orations of the most general interest were on the death of Washington and of Hamilton. From this church grew another church in 1810, which bore its pastor away to the pulpit of a new stone sanctuary on Murray Street, opposite Columbia College. In 1842 this last-named edifice was taken down, stone by stone (each carefully marked), and the structure re-erected in Eighth Street, where it still (in 1876) remains.

Hosted by Google

Scotland to their pulpit. In 1768 a substantial church edifice was erected on Cedar Street near Broadway.[1]

The Baptists were few in numbers. They had a small church (built in 1760) on Gold near John Street. The history of the organization is interesting. It originated in a prayer-meeting maintained for several years in private dwellings, and afterwards in a rigging-loft on William Street, with an occasional sermon. It was considered the branch of a church in Scotch Plains, New Jersey, Elder Miller, the pastor, coming to the city once in three months to administer the sacrament. In 1762, the number of members being twenty-seven, the body since known as the First Baptist Church was duly inaugurated, and Rev. John Gano, a promising young divine of thirty-five, became its pastor.

The Methodists were unknown in New York until 1766. In the early spring of that year a few families arrived, among whom was Rev. Philip Embury, a local preacher. He held services in his own house for a brief period, then a room was rented for a few months in the soldiers' barracks. The same winter, Captain Thomas Webb, barrack-master at Albany, was in New York, and, being a Methodist minister, preached in his regimentals. The novelty drew so large an audience that the old rigging-loft in William Street was rented and occupied some two years for religious worship. In 1768 a little edifice was built on John Street near Nassau, sixty feet long and forty-two wide. The first Methodist conference in America convened at Philadelphia in the summer of 1773, at which time it was reported that the New York church consisted of one hundred and eighty members. It was not, however, until after the Revolution (in 1784) that the Methodist Episcopal Church was regularly established.

The Moravians had built a little church on Fair (Fulton) Street in 1752, the corner-stone of which was laid by Rev. Owen Rice, and the dedication sermon preached by Bishop Spandenberg. The rise of this denomination in New York dates back to 1736, when two Moravian bishops from Germany visited the city on their way to Pennsylvania. Mr. John Noble, one of the elders in the Wall Street Presbyterian Church, invited them to hold services in his house, and became warmly enlisted in their cause. He subsequently withdrew his relations from the Wall Street Church, and was the leading man among the Moravians to the end of his life. For three years public worship was not attempted; but when the bishops returned from Pennsylvania, and were again entertained by Mr. Noble, services were resumed, and before they sailed for Europe a society of nine persons was formed. Shortly after, Count Zinzindorf, the

[1] The Cedar Street Church was not abandoned until 1836, when the organization removed to the larger edifice in Grand Street.

Hosted by Google

founder of the Moravian Church in Germany, landed in New York with a considerable colony of Moravians on their way to Pennsylvania, and his presence gave such an impulse to the movement that before he left the city, elders had been appointed and the organization placed upon a permanent basis. It was some years later, however, before the funds were collected which erected the edifice.[1]

The Quakers had a meeting-house on Little Green Street near Maiden Lane, which was built about the beginning of the century. In 1775 they erected a much larger one of brick on Pearl Street, between Franklin Square and Oak Street, but it was not completed at the breaking out of the war. The French church, described in a former chapter; the Lutheran, with its quaint belfry, corner of Rector Street and Broadway; the German Reformed, before mentioned; and the Jews' Synagogue on Mill Street (built in 1706), constitute the remainder of the places of religious worship in 1770.

Boston tore the New York letter in pieces relative to a resumption of commercial intercourse with England and scattered it with scorn.[2] The New York merchants wrote: "Ah, you rejected a congress which might have had a happy tendency to unite the whole continent in one system, and numbers say it was only a scheme in you to continue importing under pompous, ostentatious resolves against it. Your merchants have been into Connecticut soliciting the custom of the people there, and urging them to come to Boston and trade *because New York was out of goods.* The bills of entry made at the Custom House in London contain the entry of all kinds of goods, as usually shipped from your port, as if no agreement existed. The merchants of this city have never DECEIVED their neighbors, but have most religiously maintained their engagements."[3]

New York had learned the lesson that agreements were useless where no power existed to enforce their observance. The relief afforded by the influx of necessary goods produced a better state of feeling. Presently news came that the king had graciously assented to the emission
Sept. 16. of bills of credit; and when about the same time his equestrian statue arrived, it was erected with imposing ceremonies on the

[1] This church was taken down and rebuilt in 1829; when Fulton Street was widened in 1836, it was found necessary to cut off eight feet of the building. Seven years afterward it was removed and the lot sold, a new edifice being erected on the corner of Houston and Mott Streets.

[2] Votes at a full meeting at Faneuil Hall, July 24, 1770.

[3] The plan of a congress, the germ of the idea of American Union, was proposed by New York to her neighbors at an early period in the dispute. *Holt's New York Journal*, June 20, 1770, contains a suggestion in regard to a "*suitable place for a congress.*" The same paper of August 30, 1770, contains a letter from the New York committee of merchants to the Boston committee.

Hosted by Google

ancient Bowling Green, the Park of the city. The Governor, Council, Assembly, Mayor and Aldermen, Chamber of Commerce, Marine Society, officers of the army and navy, and citizens generally participated. The terraces and lofty balconies of the arrogant-looking mansions in the vicinity were filled with enthusiastic spectators. An iron railing was built around the statue by the corporation at a cost of £ 800, and it stood thus in all its gilded glory until the evening of July 9, 1776, when it was demolished by the excited soldiery immediately after the reading of the Declaration of Independence; an act partaking so much of the character of a riot as to provoke a severe rebuke from Washington the next morning.

For two years there was comparative quiet. The efforts of the Ministry to pacify New York were successful to a certain degree. Commerce, however, was only partially restored. Business was dull. Public improvements were neglected. The city was pervaded by a restless uncertainty, as if waiting for some new and strange chapter in the history of the world. TEA was still rejected. The duty had not been abolished, even though the East India Company had offered to pay double the amount of the revenue which would be derived from this impost in America, provided Parliament would repeal the law.

Meanwhile the Earl of Dunmore had arrived as governor of the province[1] (October 28, 1770), been received with the regulation ceremonies, occupied the executive chair about nine months, distinguished himself by declining the offer of an income from the Assembly,—his salary being paid from the *king's treasury*, which was to be supplied from the colonial taxes, —and by instituting a suit in chancery (over which he presided himself as chancellor) against Lieutenant-Governor Colden for half the emoluments of office, and been removed to the government of Virginia. He was an active man, fond of sports, and far more addicted to the chase than to legislative controversies. Sir William Tryon, Bart., was his successor. The latter came (July 8, 1771) fresh from seven years' residence in North Carolina, where he had made himself odious by stupid tyranny. He was less able and stronger willed than his predecessor, with smooth manners and a pleasant countenance. He courted the favor of the landed lords, and others of high rank, drank wine at their tables, boasted of his exploits on the frontiers (where he had stained his hands with innocent blood),[2] listened patiently to the complaints of the merchants, and endeavored to lull anxiety into blissful repose. He flattered himself,

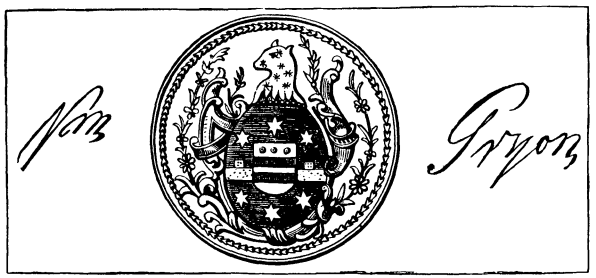
[1] Bancroft speaks of Lord Dunmore as "a needy Scottish peer of the House of Murray, passionate, narrow, and unscrupulous in his rapacity."

[2] *Bancroft*, VI. 399, 400.

Hosted by Google

as well as George III., that he was managing New York. The Assembly had appointed Edmund Burke for its agent in England, and with such an illustrious champion trusted in the probable redress of grievances.

Tryon took up his abode in the governor's house in the fort — which was burned on the night of December 29, 1773, the family escaping with difficulty and one servant perishing in the flames — and subsequently in a large mansion on Broad Street. His wife and daughter were social favorites. His counselors were Chief Justice Horsemanden, John Watts, Oliver De Lancey, Charles Ward Apthorpe, Roger Morris, William Smith, Henry Cruger, Hugh Wallace, James Jauncey, Henry White, and William Axtell.[1] Watts at this time had reached nearly threescore well-rounded years; his scholarship and refined tastes were often quoted in England, and his name was under discussion for the governorship of New York. His wealth and influence were elements of strength to the De Lancey party. His family led in the aristocratic society of that date. His eldest son Robert had recently married Lady Mary, daughter of William Alexander (Lord Stirling); his daughter Ann was the wife of Archibald Kennedy, and resided in her stately home, No. 1 Broadway;[2] his daughter Susan was the wife of Philip Kearny; his daughter Mary was the youthful bride of Sir John Johnson, of Johnson Hall; and his son John, who had recently been graduated from King's College (in 1766) was shortly to be married to his cousin Jane, the daughter of Peter De Lancey of Westchester. This wedding occurred in 1775. The sister of the bride was married the same evening to Thomas, son of Rev. Dr. Barclay. The invited guests drove from the city to the De Lancey mansion in Westchester, in old-time coaches and chaises, not a few performing the journey on horseback. So gay and brilliant an assem-



Seal and Autograph of Governor Tryon.

[1] William Axtell was appointed to the Council in the place of Hon. Joseph Reade, deceased, whose daughter was the wife of James De Peyster. William Axtell's wife was the sister of James De Peyster. Their residence was in Flatbush, Long Island. — *De Peyster Genealogy.*

Charles Ward Apthorpe had a beautiful country-seat (now standing) near what is Ninth Avenue and 91st Street; Roger Morris's mansion was on the Heights beyond; Oliver De Lancey had an elegant villa overlooking the Hudson nearer the city.

[2] See sketch, page 655; also sketch of Watts Mansion, page 732.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google


HUDSON'S RIVER
EAST
Capt. Clarke
Oliver Delancey Esq.
The Monument
Wm. Bayard Esq.
J. Jeauncey Esq.
Lady Warren
The Mountain Road
Greenwich Road
Sand Hill
A. Elliot Esq.
Abrm. Mortier Esq.
Bestarers
Herring
Bowery Lane
J. Duane Esq.
T. Tiebout
I. Watts Esq.
Kettelta
P. Stuyvesant
G. S. Stuyvesant
N. Stuyvesant
Road to Kingsbridge
Road to Bloomingdale
J. Lispenard Esq.
Duckman
The
Bayard
Foundery
James Delancy Esq.
Sale Meadows
G. Harrison Esq.
Ranelagh Garden
Fresh Water
Old Ward
Delancy's Square
Division Street
Th. Jones Esq.
Peartushes Rope Walk
Little Division St.
J. Rutgers
Common
Ship Yards
Corlaer's Hook or Crown Point
Westward Boundaries
Hook Ferry
Field Marshall
THE RATZER MAP

Hosted by Google

blage had hardly met since the marriage of Alice, the eldest sister of the brides, to the celebrated Ralph Izard, of South Carolina, some eight years before. John Watts, the younger, was the last City Recorder under the Crown; and he was one of the prominent characters of the city after the Revolution, of whom we shall have occasion to speak further.

The quarter nearest the fort was the court end of the town. The mansions of the Lawrences, Crugers, Van Dams, Bayards, Morrises, Van Hornes, and other consequential families, were in full view of the Bowling Green. Fashion had set her face towards Wall Street, and the Verplancks, Winthrops, Marstons, Buchanans, Roosevelts, Ludlows, and a few others, were already there. Daniel Ludlow had a country-seat at Barretto's Point on the East River, from which he was accustomed to drive into the city four-in-hand during the summer months.

Chief Justice Robert R. Livingston, father of the future chancellor, occupied a city mansion on Broadway, just north of the Wattses. His numerous sons and daughters had not all as yet reached mature age, but their influence was beginning to be felt. The journey of this family to and from their manor-house at Clermont every spring and autumn was something imposing, for they were attended by a long train of men-servants and maid-servants, and the transportation either by sloop or by land occupied many days. There were many fine houses on Broadway. Nos. 9 and 11 belonged to the Van Cortlandts, whose country-seat was at Kingbridge.[1] They were built together, presenting a somewhat peculiar front, and were surrounded by grounds filled with shrubbery and flowers. No. 11 was the inheritance of Eve Van Cortlandt, who married Henry White, the counselor, and it was where she lived for more than a half-century after the Revolution; she died within its walls, August 11, 1836, aged ninety-eight.[2] John Stevens, whose wife was a sister of Lord Stirling, lived next door. Dock Street contained the handsome residences of the Wallaces.

[1] See sketch, page 697.

[2] After the death of Mrs. White the two dwelling-houses were converted into a public house known as the Atlantic Garden. It was pulled down a few years ago, and historic fiction having erroneously identified it with the Burns Coffee-House, sundry chairs and canes were made from its rafters. The place where the famous non-importation agreement was signed, October 31, 1765, was the old De Lancey homestead, just north of Trinity Church, converted into a public house known variously as the "Province Arms," the "New York Arms," the "York Arms," the "City Arms," and often called by the name of the proprietor, as "Burns Tavern," and "Burns Coffee-House." It had a variety of proprietors: Willett, Crawley, Burns, Bolton, Hull, and others. During the Revolution it was the favorite resort for the military officers on account of its piazzas and balconies, and its proximity to the fashionable promenade, "The Mall," in front of Trinity Church. It had a large ball-room, where concerts and dancing assemblies were given. In 1793 it was taken down and the City Hotel erected on its site. — *Judge Robert R. Livingston's Correspondence, Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, X. 560. *Progress of New York in a Century*, by John Austin Stevens.

Hosted by Google

It was at the house of Hugh Wallace, the counselor, that Governor Tryon was sumptuously entertained on his return from England in 1775. Isaac Low lived also on this street; and Robert Gilbert Livingston, Jr., and Robert Cambridge Livingston.[1] Philip Livingston, the eminent merchant, and signer of the Declaration of Independence, had a house on Duke Street, but he spent the greater part of every year at his country-seat on Brooklyn Heights. The ancient town-house of his brother Robert, the third lord of Livingston Manor, was on Broad Street. Another brother, Peter Van Brugh Livingston (whose wife was the sister of Lord Stirling), lived on Princess Street; another brother, John Livingston (whose wife was the daughter of Treasurer Abraham De Peyster), dwelt in a pretentious mansion on Queen Street; and still another, William Livingston, lived on Pine Street, near the town mansion of the lord of Philipse Manor. He was, however, building "Liberty Hall," in Elizabeth, New Jersey, at this time, which he completed and occupied late in the autumn of 1773, having owned some one hundred and twenty acres of rich land in that region for the last dozen years. His four brilliant daughters were sadly missed when they removed from the city; and they were in no wise backward about expressing their own regret at the change, saying they expected to be "buried from society in that sequestered part of the globe." But, notwithstanding their gloomy predictions, the toilsome and muddy way from the landing was kept well trodden by gay and ever-welcome guests. And on the twenty-eighth day of the next April (1774), the beautiful Sarah Livingston, who had not yet reached her eighteenth birthday, was wedded to the afterward celebrated John Jay, and a large proportion of the notable people of New York were present at the ceremony. Lord Stirling, who had married the sister of these numerous Livingstons, had a city home on Broad Street, although his estates were chiefly in New Jersey.

The De Lanceys, like the Livingstons, had many mansions, several of which have been already described. The most famous public house in the city, as far as its historic associations were concerned, Fraunces' Tavern, corner of Broad and Dock Streets, had been in former times the family homestead of Etienne (Stephen) De Lancey, built on land conveyed to him by his father-in-law, Hon. Stephanus Van Cortlandt. It was purchased by Samuel Fraunces in 1762, and opened under the sign of "Queen

[1] Robert Gilbert Livingston, Jr., was the grandson of Gilbert, second son of the first lord of the manor. He retired to Red Hook on the Hudson during the war. Robert Cambridge Livingston was the son of Robert, third lord of the manor; he took his middle name, as a distinction, from having graduated from Cambridge University, England. His wife was Alice, the daughter of John Swift, one of the most beautiful and gifted women of her day. They had a country-seat on Brooklyn Heights.

Hosted by Google

Charlotte." It had various names and keepers. Societies met here; and in one of the great rooms of the second story the Chamber of Commerce held its monthly meetings for many years. Here occurred the immortal farewell of Washington to his officers in 1783. Two stories have since been added to the edifice, as may be seen in the sketch.[1]

Hanover Square was the great business center of the city. A few private dwellings of the better class were there, but the buildings were chiefly stores and warehouses. On the corner of Hanover Square and Sloat Lane was the mansion of Gerard W. Beekman, whose wife was Mary Duyckinck. He and his brother, James Beekman, sons of Dr. William Beekman and Catharine Peters de la Noy, and great-grandsons of Hon. William Beekman, with whom the reader is acquainted, were importers and held a prominent position among the merchants. Their sister Cornelia was the wife of the elder William Walton.[2] James Beekman had recently built the Beekman mansion on the East River.[3] His wife was Jane Keteltas, a lady of New York birth, so clever and accomplished that she was able to superintend the education of her children during the seven years' exile of the family in the Revolution, and fitted her sons for college. Queen Street (now Pearl) was dotted with fine residences. One owned and occupied by Henry White, the counselor, was formerly the De Peyster mansion, with its wealth of balconies and grounds.[4] After the war it was



Interior of the great Historic Room in Fraunces' Tavern.

[1] See page 656. Among the public houses in New York at that time was one on Brownjohn's Wharf, at the Fly Market, largely patronized by British officers; another, near by, was known as "Smith's Tavern." "Bull's Head," in the Bowery Lane, was a two-story and attic country tavern, surrounded by pens for droves of cattle. It was near the public slaughter-house. Mead-houses and tea-gardens were numerous. The celebrated garden and tavern of La Montagne was opposite the present park. "Vauxhall" was a garden at the foot of Warren Street, reaching to Chambers Street, the residence formerly of Major James of Stamp-Act Riot memory. Coffee-houses were much in vogue. The "Merchants' Coffee-House" stood on the southeast corner of Wall and Water Streets, the site later occupied by the Journal of Commerce.

[2] See sketch of Walton mansion, page 684.

[3] See sketch of Beekman mansion, page 569.

[4] See sketch, page 656.

Hosted by Google

the residence of George Clinton, the first governor of New York as a State. To the north of it was the home of Andrew Elliot, lieutenant-governor from 1780 to 1783, whose daughter married Lord Cathcart; another daughter married James Jauncey, the counselor. The Brevoorts resided in the same neighborhood; also Whitehead Hicks, mayor of the city from 1766 to 1776, who married the only child of John Brevoort. Elias Desbrosses, whose name has been perpetuated by a street; James Duane, the famous lawyer, whose wife was the daughter of Robert, third lord of Livingston Manor; Theophylact Bache,[1] fifth president of the Chamber of Commerce; one branch of the Van Zandts, and many other families of note lived upon this street. Walter Franklin, an importing merchant of the time, occupied an elegant mansion on the corner of Cherry Street and Franklin Square (near the Walton House), which was afterwards the residence of the first President of the United States. He owned, besides, a beautiful country-seat at Maspeth, which became in course of time the residence of De Witt Clinton, who married his daughter.

Shops and places of business were upon every street to some extent. Of the great sugar-houses, one, owned by the Livingstons, was on Liberty Street near the Dutch Church; another, a massive structure, built by Henry Cuyler, Jr., for his heir Barent Rynders Cuyler (in 1769), and later belonging to the Rhinelanders, is still standing on the corner of Rose and Duane Streets. There was one, also, which belonged to the Van Cortlandts, on the northwest corner of Trinity Churchyard; and another, built by the Roosevelts, on Skinner Street near the Walton House. The Bayard sugar-house on Wall Street was, in 1773, converted into a tobacco manufactory. Sidewalks had only reached St. Paul's Chapel. Broadway above that point was a pleasant country-road, open nearly as far as Anthony Street. The map will give the reader a general idea of the farms and country-seats upon Manhattan Island at this point in our narrative.

Governor Tryon, accompanied by his wife, visited Sir William Johnson, at Johnson Hall, in the summer of 1772, his ostensible object being to meet the Mohawk sachems in relation to their land grievances; his real purpose, to effect some land purchases for private speculation. The settlement of Johnstown had become a flourishing village, and the whole valley of the Mohawk wore the appearance of a rich farming country. Oliver De Lancey and Henry White, with several other gentlemen, were

[1] Theophylact Bache married Ann Dorothy, daughter of Andrew Barclay. Of Mrs. Bache's sisters, Catharine married Augustus Van Cortlandt; Sarah married Anthony Lispenard; Ann Margaret married Francis Jay; Helena married Major Moncrieff, a British officer of distinction; and Charlotte Amelia married Dr. Richard Bailey. Richard Bache, a younger brother of Theophylact, married Sarah, the only daughter of Benjamin Franklin.

Hosted by Google

present at this conference with the Indians. The militia of the region, amounting to upwards of fourteen hundred effective men, of whom Johnson was justly proud,[1] was reviewed by Tryon before he left. The next spring, Tryon traveled through New England, and was hospitably entertained by Governor Trumbull of Connecticut; and he also visited the different districts of New Jersey.[2] An act having been passed by the Assembly for founding the present New York Hospital, he laid 1773. the corner-stone in July of the same year. The scheme originated July 23. with three physicians, Drs. Middleton, Jones, and Bard, who had started subscription-lists three years before. Five acres of land on Broadway between Duane and Anthony Streets had been secured, and the buildings were erected at a cost of some $18,000. While in process of completion, they took fire and sustained great injury. They were finished just in time to be used as barracks for the British soldiers in 1776.

The persistent refusal of the colonies to receive tea from England finally brought distress upon the East India Company. Its stock depreciated nearly one half.[3] It could not pay its annual debt to the British government, which was a terrific shock to credit. The directors confessed their bankrupt condition and entreated Parliament for relief. Lord North, determined not to relinquish the right to tax the colonies, proposed to allow the company to export its teas duty free in England, which would enable the colonists to buy at a lower price. Hence an act of Parliament to that effect.

The tranquillity of New York, which for months had been in singular contrast to the raging of political elements in other portions of America, was fiercely disturbed by this intelligence, and that tea ships were on the ocean destined for her port. Such an attempt to enforce the controverted tax was offensive in the superlative degree. The whole city was in commotion. "The general voice is no sales, no consumption, while the American duty remains unrepealed by Parliament," wrote Tryon.[4] "The tea shall not be landed," was the universal and emphatic exclamation. Two days after Philadelphia had convinced her tea agents of the policy Oct. 26. of resigning their appointments, a meeting was held at the City Hall in Wall Street, where Tea Commissioners were denounced, and resolutions passed thanking masters of vessels who had refused their ships to the use of the East India Company. The attempted monopoly of trade was stigmatized a "public robbery." The columns of the newspapers ran over with anony-

[1] *Governor Tryon to the Earl of Hillsborough*, August 31, 1772.
[2] *Governor Tryon to the Earl of Dartmouth*, May 31, 1773.
[3] *Bancroft*, VI. 457 – 465.
[4] *Governor Tryon to the Earl of Dartmouth*, November 3, 1773.

Hosted by Google

mous articles on the subject, and handbills were circulated freely among the people.[1] "The Alarm" was conspicuous among the latter, issued in series, the writer signing himself "Hampden." "If you touch one grain of the accursed tea, you are undone," was the sentiment it conveyed. There were others signed "Cassius," "A Farmer," "A Tradesman," "A Student of the Law," etc. "America is threatened with worse than Egyptian slavery. The language of the Revenue Act is that you have no property you can call your own; that you are the vassals, the livestock of the people of Great Britain. The inhabitants of New York have more wisdom and spirit than to be duped into a measure that will ruin their commerce and enslave them," were some of the bold words which fell from bolder pens. Within three weeks the New York agents prudently retired from the field. It was thereupon announced that government would take charge of the tea upon its arrival.

The Sons of Liberty reorganized at once. The salient features of the Association, to which they subscribed their names, and which was passed from hand to hand through the city for signatures, appear in the following extracts: "It is essential to the freedom and security of a free people that no taxes be imposed upon them but by their own consent; for what property have they in that which another may by right take when he pleases to himself? and yet, to the astonishment of all the world and the grief of America, the Commons of Great Britain insist upon imposing taxes on the colonies. To prevent a calamity which of all others is the most to be dreaded, — slavery and its terrible concomitants, — we, the subscribers, being disposed to use all lawful endeavors in our power to defeat the pernicious project, and to transmit to our posterity the blessings of freedom which our ancestors have handed down to us; and to contribute to the support of the common liberties of America which are in danger of being subverted, DO agree and engage our honor to and with each other faithfully to observe and perform." Then came a list of stern resolutions. Owners and occupants of stores were warned against harboring the tea; and whoever should dare to transgress in the way of aiding or assisting in the landing, carting, or depositing of the tea, or in buying or selling, or in any manner contributing to the purchase or sale of the tea, was threatened as an enemy to the liberty of his country; at the same time handbills were issued notifying the "Mohawks" to hold themselves in readiness for active work.

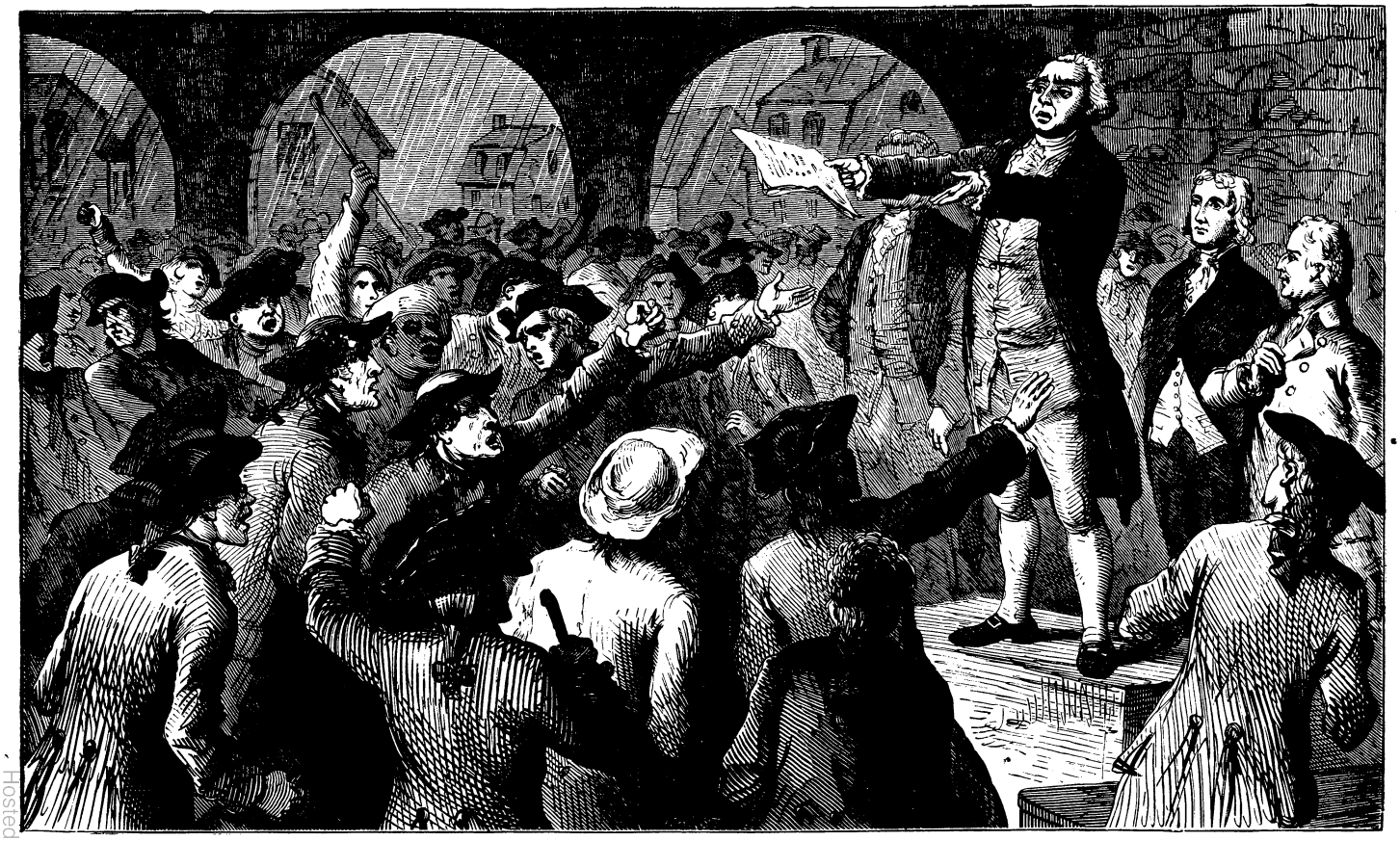
Nov. 29.

The tea ships reached Boston first, and the world is aware how the issue was met. At the very moment when three hundred and forty

[1] Handbills preserved in New York Historical Society.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google



"'Is it, then, your opinion, gentlemen, that the tea should be landed, under this circumstance?' There was one prolonged and vociferous shout which echoed far into the street, and was three times repeated, 'No! no! no!'" Page 763.

Hosted by Google

chests of the condemned article were mixing with the salt of Boston harbor, handbills were being distributed through New York calling a meeting of "All Friends to the Liberties and Trade of America" for one o'clock the next day, at the City Hall, "on business of the utmost importance." The weather was bad, yet a great crowd of citizens assembled at the time appointed, and were addressed by John Lamb. After stating the object of the meeting, he read letters from Boston and Philadelphia on the subject of the "dutied tea"; he also read the Association of the Sons of Liberty, with the resolutions previously adopted. Just then the Mayor, Whitehead Hicks,[1] entered, accompanied by the Recorder, Robert R. Livingston (afterwards Chancellor), and, taking his place near the speaker, said: — Dec. 16. Dec. 17.

"Gentlemen, I have a message from the government to deliver to you. The governor declares that the tea will be put into the fort at noonday, and engages his honor that it shall continue there till the Council shall advise it to be delivered out, or till the king's order or the proprietor's order is known; and then the tea shall be delivered out at noonday. Gentlemen, is this satisfactory to you?"

There was an immediate and boisterous response of "No! No! No!"

Lamb proceeded, excitedly, to read the Act of Parliament which prescribed the payment of the duty upon the landing of the tea, and after some pertinent remarks upon the giving and granting of the property of the Americans, asked, "Is it, then, your opinion, gentlemen, that the tea should be landed under this circumstance?"

There was one prolonged and vociferous shout which echoed far into the street, and was three times repeated, "No! No! No!"

It was voted unanimously that the action of the meeting should be published and transmitted to the other colonies, after which it adjourned to await the arrival of the tea ship.

The winter wore away, yet it did not appear, having been detained by contrary winds. In April Governor Tryon and his family sailed for Europe for a brief absence, and the affairs of government once more devolved upon Lieutenant-Governor Colden. The sails of the vessel which bore the governor across the seas had hardly disappeared, when the tea ship, *Nancy*, Captain Lockyer, arrived off Sandy Hook. The pilot declined to bring her through the Narrows until the sense of 1774. April 7.

[1] Whitehead Hicks, son of Thomas Hicks, was born at Flushing, Long Island, August 24, 1728. He studied law with Judge William Smith, in the same class with William Smith, the historian (son of the former), and William Livingston. He rose to distinction at the bar, was mayor of the city from 1766 to 1776, when he resigned on being appointed one of the Judges of the Supreme Court. He died in 1780.

Hosted by Google

the city was known. Handbills were quickly in circulation, and the committee decided that the captain's request to visit Hon. Henry White, one of the consignees, and to procure supplies for his return voyage should be granted, but none of his crew might come ashore; he was to be attended and closely watched in all his movements by a special committee chosen for the purpose.

April 18.

April 19.

On the 22d the *London*, Captain Chambers, arrived, and on being visited by the committee denied having any tea on board. Private information from Philadelphia, however, induced an examination; none being found, the vessel was conducted to the city, and the captain informed that every package in the hatches must be overhauled. He immediately confessed that he had eighteen chests stored below which had been shipped for private speculation. The committee went to the Merchants Coffee-House to consult with a number of gentlemen there assembled, and presently made a public announcement that the tea on the *London* was confiscated. Meanwhile an excited multitude collected on the wharf, and without disguise or ceremony proceeded to the execution of justice. A proper guard was detailed by the merchants to prevent waste, and the tea was thrown into the bay, without confusion or injury to other property. The captain was nowhere to be found.

April 22.

The next morning the bells of the city began to ring at eight o'clock, according to a previous notice for the calling of the citizens together to witness the departure of Captain Lockyer. The object was to let him see with his own eyes, and thus be able to report truthfully in England, the detestation with which the measures of the English Ministry were regarded in New York. The bells rang for an hour without intermission (he was to embark at nine), and an immense but orderly throng filled the streets. He was conducted from his lodgings to the wharf, the band playing "God save the King," and placed in a pilot-boat — still under escort — and conveyed to his vessel, the ships in the harbor displaying their colors, and the flag on the liberty-pole rising under a royal salute of artillery.

April 23.

Even while New York was thus sending back her tea ship in the most public manner, the bill was maturing at the Court of George III. which was to punish Boston for her misbehavior. On the same day that Louis XVI. of France, then not twenty years of age, and the still more youthful Marie Antoinette found themselves at the head of the French nation, Boston learned her fate. On the 1st of June the slow torture was applied which was to force her into submission; her port was closed, the Board of Customs removed to Marblehead and the seat of government to Salem. General Gage was the military

May 10.

June 1.

Hosted by Google

executor of the law. There was one spontaneous outburst of sympathy from every town and hamlet in America. In Philadelphia the bells of the churches were muffled and tolled throughout the entire day when the cheerful industry of Boston came to an end. In Virginia the people fasted and prayed in the churches. Ships all along the seaboard hoisted their colors at half-mast.

New York writhed under the wrong inflicted upon Boston. When the copy of the Port Act was first received, the city stood, like one man, astonished that all Parliament had assented to such cruelty. Then followed a whirlwind of indignation and dismay. The bill was cried through the streets as a "barbarous murder," and there was such an uprising of the people, with nightly processions and effigy burnings, that the more substantial part of the community feared serious riots, and resolved to guide the movement; hence a meeting was called at Fraunces' Tavern, which proved so large, comprising men from all ranks, — commerce, politics, and the professions, — that it was necessary to adjourn to the Exchange. Isaac Low occupied the chair. The proposition to choose a committee of control and correspondence was well received. But in the choice of the committee two parties battled for precedence. It was the old story, men striving for individual preferment. The radical leaders of the Sons of Liberty were determined to retain the direction of affairs, and when public sentiment decided in favor of the opposite ticket, comprising, as it did, a greater number of names and a wider range of interest, they were intensely bitter in their denunciation of every movement not in harmony with their preconceived notions of the methods by which oppression should be resisted.

May 12.

May 17.

The Committee of Fifty-One organized, on the 23d, with the appointment of Isaac Low chairman, and John Alsop deputy-chairman. One of the first propositions was a congress of the Colonies, which should regulate the subject of non-importation. Isaac Low, John Jay, James Duane, and Alexander McDougall were chosen to draft a letter to suffering Boston, and a clear, concise, straightforward document was prepared and signed the same evening. "The cause is general," it said, "and concerns a whole continent who are equally interested with you and with us; we foresee no remedy can be of any avail unless it proceeds from the joint act and approbation of all."

May 23.

This letter, preserved in the New York Historical Society, settles the question as to the origin of the Continental Congress of 1774. It was not an "achievement of the Sons of Liberty," — that organization having been invested with no power beyond the disposal of the tea, — but a result of the calmer judgment of the much misrepresented Fifty-One,

Hosted by Google

who not only vividly remembered how New York had been allowed to keep former non-importation agreements alone, but regarded the matter as too grave and important at this crisis for individual colonial action. There was no "refusal to adopt stringent measures against the parent government." On the contrary, there was a cordial pledge, frankly stated in a subsequent letter dated June 5, to agree to any measure which should be adopted by a general congress. A complication in the correspondence with the Boston committee, which has misled nearly every historian who has since written of the action of New York in the spring of 1774, was brought about through a letter of condolence (dated May 14), written in the heat and heedlessness of excitement by certain members of the old committee of the Sons of Liberty, which announced the meeting in contemplation to choose a new committee, and pledged the organization in advance to non-importation. The Fifty-One knew nothing of it until Boston took them to task for not suspending trade. Of course the pledge was pronounced "unofficial"; and in return the Fifty-One were accused of seeking "to evade decisive action." It is very evident, however, while scanning events through the light of a century, that had New York adopted the weak measure, on the start, so earnestly desired by Boston, there would have been no congress at that time, if ever. It was only when Boston found that New York would be satisfied with nothing less than a congress of the Colonies that she consented.

When the concurrence of the other Colonies had also been obtained, and Philadelphia named as the place, and September the time, for the meeting of the Congress, New York proceeded to choose delegates.

July 4. The Fifty-One nominated Philip Livingston, John Alsop, Isaac Low, James Duane, and John Jay, three merchants and two lawyers. Isaac Sears, noisy and headstrong, labored to procure the nomination of John Morin Scott and Alexander McDougall, in which he was ably seconded by the sagacious and inflexible Peter Van Brugh Livingston; not succeeding, an opposition ticket appeared the next day whereon the names of McDougall and Leonard Lispenard were substituted for James Duane and John Alsop. A meeting called in the Fields, July 6, was presided over by McDougall himself,[1] and a violent effort was made by the dissatisfied to form a party sufficiently strong to control the election. The people were exhorted to beware of the tameness of the Fifty-One, and to imitate Boston in her devotion to rigid non-intercourse. Resolutions

[1] Compare *Bancroft*, VII.; *Leake's Life of John Lamb; Letter from Colden to Dartmouth*, June 1, 1774; *Colden to Dartmouth*, July 6, 1774; *Handbills in New York Historical Society; Stevens's Chamber of Commerce Records.* See also Appendix C.

Hosted by Google

were passed to that effect, and, with an account of the proceedings of the meeting, were despatched to Boston.

In the committee-room of the Fifty-One the next morning, the irregular meeting in the Fields, and the questionable propriety of the course of McDougall in acting as its chairman while one of their own number, were discussed with much warmth. A vote was finally passed, July 7. censuring the proceedings as unauthorized and as tending to cast odium upon the committee and create disunion in the city. A minority of nine, among whom were Sears, McDougall, Lispenard, and Peter Van Brugh Livingston, immediately withdrew in high temper. In the strife which followed the Fifty-One firmly adhered to its nomination, and were invincible to every assault made upon its purity of purpose and integrity. A card was finally addressed to the nominees, asking whether they would support the Massachusetts resolves in the approaching Congress. They replied promptly and publicly that such a course would be in accordance with their individual opinions, which gave such universal satisfaction that when the question was submitted, July 28, to the voters of the city, all differences were for the time healed.

Few events in the history of America have so deeply moved the public mind as the meeting of this first Congress. Men were everywhere weighing the issues. The vision of possibly establishing an independent republic on American soil was vague, and the prudent knew that it was a doubtful experiment. There was no precedent from which to borrow models. And if successful in breaking away from England, there was danger of falling into bloody dissensions among themselves. August was a memorable month. The delegates from Massachusetts to the Congress were escorted and fêted on their way as if they had been princes of the realm. They spent a few days in New York. John Adams wrote in his journal that John Morin Scott was a lawyer of fifty, living in an elegant country-seat three miles out of the city on the Hudson, and that he was "a sensible man, and one of the readiest speakers on the continent, but not very polite"; McDougall "was talkative, and appeared to have a thorough knowledge of politics," he lived handsomely, and had a charming wife and daughter; Peter Van Brugh Livingston "was an old man, extremely stanch in the cause, and very sensible"; William Smith (the historian) "was a plain, composed man, a little turned of forty"; John Jay "was young, a hard student of the law, and a good speaker"; James Duane was about forty-five, "very sensible and very artful, and had a sly, surveying eye"; Isaac Low "was a gentleman of fortune, and in trade, and his wife was a beauty." They were treated by the Fifty-One with distinguished consideration, and were attended into New Jersey August 29.

Hosted by Google

The New York delegates commenced their journey September 1, with the exception of John Jay, who crossed to Elizabethtown, August 29, and, in company with his father-in-law, William Livingston, proceeded to the Quaker City. Isaac Low was escorted to the ferry stairs at the foot of Cortlandt Street by a great number of the inhabitants, with banners and music and huzzas. At the water's edge he took leave, with a brief speech; a few persons accompanied him and his lady to the New Jersey shore, the band playing "God save the King." The inhabitants then returned, so say the papers of the day, to testify the like respect to the other three gentlemen, Philip Livingston, James Duane, and John Alsop, who embarked at the foot of Broad Street. When the procession reached the Exchange, Duane thanked the people, "in a very affectionate and moving manner," for the honor conferred, and declared that he and his brother delegates should do all in their power to bring relief to this once happy but now aggrieved country. They were saluted as they crossed the water by several pieces of cannon, and loud huzzas rent the air; after which a number of gentlemen celebrated the event at St. George's Ferry, dating the salvation of America from that hour, and resolved at the risk of all they held dear to respect the resolutions which Congress should think necessary to adopt for the good of the common cause.

As the distress of Boston was hourly increasing, one of the earliest acts of this first Congress was to approve the opposition of Massachusetts to the execution of the late acts of Parliament. It presently adopted a Declaration of Rights, in which the repeal of eleven acts of Parliament were specified as necessary to the restoration of harmony between the Colonies and Great Britain. It also unanimously resolved to import no merchandise from Great Britain after the first day of the coming December, unless American grievances were redressed. It ended, October 26, with a petition to the king, which, however, made no impression upon George III. other than to confirm him in his purpose of exacting obedience; but its members, with keen political foresight, provided for the holding of another Congress in Philadelphia on the 16th of the coming May, which proved, indeed, the immortal Congress that declared the independence of America.

The New York Committee of Fifty-One, having accomplished its object, appointed a day for the choice, by the freeholders of the city, of a "Committee of Observation," numbering sixty, to enforce in New York the Non-Importation Act of the late Congress; and when this new committee was duly elected and organized, with Isaac Low as chairman, the Fifty-One was dissolved.

Hosted by Google

APPENDIX.

A.

THE inscription upon the Schuyler vase is as follows: —

Presented by
ANNE QUEEN OF ENGLAND
to
COL PETER SCHUYLER OF ALBANY
In the Province of New York
April 19, 1710.
To commemorate his visit to England by request
of the Provincial government, accompanied
by five sachems of the MOHAWKS.

Page 480.

B.

The inscription upon the old bell in Dr. Ludlow's church is as follows: —

Me fecerunt De Gravæ et N. Muller,
Amsterdam, Anno 1731,
ABRAHAM DE PEYSTER,
geboren (born) den 8 July, 1657,
gestorven (died) den 8 Augustus, 1728.
Een legaat aan de Nederduytsche Kerke, Nieuw York.
(A legacy to the Low Dutch Church at New York.)

C.

At a meeting at the Exchange, 16th May, 1774, ISAAC LOW chosen CHAIRMAN: —

1st Question put. Whether it is necessary, for the present, to appoint a committee to correspond with the neighboring Colonies on the present important crisis?

Carried in the affirmative by a great majority.

2d. Whether a committee be nominated this evening for the approbation of the public?

Carried in the affirmative by a great majority.

3d. Whether of fifty be appointed, or twenty-five?

Carried for fifty by a great majority.

Hosted by Google

The following persons were nominated: —

John Alsop.
William Bayard.
Theophylact Bache.
Peter Van Brugh Livingston.
Philip Livingston.
Isaac Sears.
David Johnston.
Charles McEvers.
Charles Nichol.
Alexander McDougall.
Captain Thomas Randall.
John Moore.
Isaac Low.
Leonard Lispenard.
Jacobus Van Zandt.
James Duane.
Edward Laight.
Thomas Pearsal.
Elias Desbrosses.
William Walton.
Richard Yates.
John De Lancey.
Miles Sherbrook.
John Thurman.
John Jay.
John Broom.
Benjamin Booth.
Joseph Hallet.
Charles Shaw.
Alexander Wallace.
James Jauncey.
Gabriel H. Ludlow.
Nicholas Hoffman.
Abraham Walton.
Gerardus Duyckinck.
Peter Van Schaick.
Henry Remsen.
Hamilton Young.
George Bowne.
Peter T. Curtenius.
Peter Goelet.
Abraham Brasher.
Abraham P. Lott.
David Van Horne.
Gerardus W. Beekman.
Abraham Duryee.
Joseph Bull.
William McAdam.
Richard Sharpe.
Thomas Marston.

The name of Francis Lewis was afterward added, making the number fifty-one.

Handbill in New York Historical Society.

D.

The Committee of Sixty, known as the "Committee of Observation," elected November 22, 1774, were as follows: —

Isaac Low.
Philip Livingston.
James Duane.
John Alsof.
John Jay.
Peter Van Brugh Livingston.
Isaac Sears.
David Johnston.
Charles Nichol.
Alexander McDougall.
Thomas Randall.
Leonard Lispenard.
Edward Laight.
William Walton.
John Broom.
Joseph Hallett.
Charles Shaw.
Nicholas Hoffman.
Abraham Walton.
Peter Van Schaick.
Henry Remsen.
Peter T. Curtenius.
Abraham Brasher.
Abraham P. Lott.
Abraham Duryee.
Joseph Bull.
Francis Lewis.
John Lasher.
John Roome.
Joseph Totten.
Samuel Jones.
John De Lancey.
Frederick Jay.
William W. Ludlow.
John B. Moore.
George Janeway.
Rodolphus Ritzema.
Lindley Murray.
Lancaster Burling.
Thomas Ives.
Hercules Mulligan.
John Anthony.
Francis Basset.
Victor Bicker.
John White.
Theophilus Anthony.
William Goforth.
William Denning.
Isaac Rosevelt.
Jacob Van Voorhees.
Jeremiah Platt.
William Ustick.
Comfort Sands.
Robert Benson.
William W. Gilbert.
John Berrian.
Gabriel H. Ludlow.
Nicholas Roosevelt.
Edward Flemming.
Lawrence Embree.

Force's American Archives, p. 330.

Hosted by Google

E.

THE Mayors of New York City before the Revolution were: —

Thomas Willet, 1665, 1667.
Thomas Delavall, 1666, 1671, 1678.
Cornelis Steenwyck, 1668–1670, 1682, 1683.
Matthias Nicolls, 1672.
John Lawrence, 1673, 1691.
William Dervall, 1695.
Nicholas De Meyer, 1676.
Stephanus Van Cortlandt, 1677, 1686, 1687.
Francis Rombouts, 1679.
William Dyer, 1680, 1681.
Gabriel Minvielle, 1684.
Nicholas Bayard, 1685.
Peter de la Noy, 1689, 1690.
Abraham de Peyster, 1692–1695.
William Merritt, 1695–1698.
Johannes de Peyster, 1698, 1699.
David Provoost, 1699, 1700.
Isaac de Riemer, 1700, 1701.
Thomas Noell, 1701, 1702.
Philip French, 1702, 1703.
William Peartree, 1703–1707.
Ebenezer Wilson, 1707–1710.
Jacobus Van Cortlandt, 1710, 1711, 1719, 1720.
Caleb Heathcote, 1711–1714.
John Johnson, 1714–1719.
Robert Walters, 1720–1725.
Johannes Jansen, 1725, 1726.
Robert Lurting, 1726–1735.
Paul Richards, 1735–1739.
John Cruger, 1739–1744.
Stephen Bayard, 1744–1747.
Edward Holland, 1747–1757.
John Cruger, 1757–1766.
Whitehead Hicks, 1766–1776.

F.

THE Governors and Acting Governors of New York before the Revolution were: —

Peter Minuet.
Wouter Van Twiller.
Wilhelm Kieft.
Peter Stuyvesant.
Richard Nicolls.
Francis Lovelace.
Admirals Evertzen & Binckes.
Anthony Colve.
Sir Edmund Andros.
Anthony Brockholls.
Thomas Dongan.
Francis Nicholson.
Jacob Leisler.
Henry Sloughter.
Richard Ingoldsby.
Benjamin Fletcher.
Earl of Bellomont.
Abraham de Peyster.
John Nanfan.
Lord Cornbury.
Lord Lovelace.
Dr. Gerardus Beekman.
Robert Hunter.
Peter Schuyler.
William Burnet.
John Montgomery.
Rip Van Dam.
William Corby.
George Clarke.
Admiral George Clinton.
Sir Danvers Osborne.
James De Lancey.
Sir Charles Hardy.
Cadwallader Colden.
Robert Monckton.
Sir Henry Moore.
Earl of Dunmore.
Sir William Tryon.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

HISTORY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1775.

THE THRESHOLD OF THE REVOLUTION.

VARIOUS CURRENTS OF HUMAN THOUGHT. — CONFLICTING OPINIONS IN ENGLAND. — PETITION OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS. — CHATHAM'S ARGUMENT. — THE MINISTRY COURTING NEW YORK. — DEATH OF SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON. — INDIAN WAR ON THE OHIO RIVER. — ACTION OF THE NEW YORK ASSEMBLY. — NEW YORK REPUBLICAN IN SENTIMENT. — ACTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF SIXTY. — THE REVOLUTIONARY CONVENTION. — DELEGATES TO THE SECOND CONTINENTAL CONGRESS. — THE TREE OF FREEDOM. — NEWS OF THE BATTLE OF LEXINGTON. — THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT POWERLESS IN NEW YORK. — THE COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED. — REPUBLICANISM. — PRESIDENT MYLES COOPER OF KING'S COLLEGE. — JOHN HOLT, THE PRINTER. — CAPTURE OF TICONDEROGA. — THE NEW YORK CONGRESS. — THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL. — WASHINGTON IN NEW YORK. — THE "ASIA." — CONDITION OF THE CITY. — EXPLOIT OF ISAAC SEARS. — GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER. — GENERAL RICHARD MONTGOMERY. — THE INVASION OF CANADA.

AS we enter upon a conflict which wrought one of the greatest triumphs in history, — the founding of a powerful nation, — it is interesting to trace the various currents of human thought in regions widely remote from each other which stamped their influence upon coming events. We have noted the high sense of political justice which prevailed in New York, and the intelligence and energy with which her citizens in every decade asserted hereditary rights. A certain vital force, gathered unconsciously through the sharp discussion of knotty questions and the resolute sitting in judgment upon the edicts of the royal government, with roots far in the past, and a long genealogy, needed only signal occasion to ignite and become purely Roman and regal. But, with all her ceaseless internal agitations, New York was scarcely more divided in opinion than England herself. And nearly in the same ratio with New York, whose extensive frontier was at the mercy of innumerable tribes of

Hosted by Google

war-loving Indians, loyal to the crown, the higher intelligence of Great Britain was appalled at the prospect of an armed struggle.

In the House of Lords one peer pronounced the military coercion of America impracticable. Another recommended the cutting of the colonies adrift, "to perish in anarchy and repentance." Many ridiculed the idea of open rebellion in America. "How can a people without arms, ammunition, money, or navy, dare to brave the foremost among the great powers of the earth?" they asked. Camden exclaimed, "Were I an American, I would resist to the last drop of my blood." Sandwich, then at the head of the Admiralty, answered with clever witticisms concerning American cowardice, causing uproarious laughter. "I tell you," he said, "that Americans are neither disciplined nor capable of discipline." George III., to all suggestions, scornfully replied, "Blows must decide whether the Colonists are to be subject to this country or to be independent."

The new Parliament spent the entire month of December in profitless discussions. Just before its adjournment for the holidays, the proceedings of the first Continental Congress reached England. The petition to the king was dignified in tone and forcible in expression; even the crowned head was filled with surprise! The Colonies asked only security in their ancient condition! The appeal was simply for justice. For equal rights with British subjects who dwelt upon home soil. One passage, as an illustration: —

1774.

"You have been told that we are impatient of government and desirous of independency. These are calumnies. Permit us to be as free as yourselves, and we shall ever esteem a union with you to be our greatest glory and our greatest happiness. But if you are determined that your ministers shall wantonly sport with the rights of mankind; if neither the voice of justice, the dictates of law, the principles of the Constitution, or the suggestions of humanity, can restrain your hands from shedding human blood in such an impious cause, we must then tell you that we will never submit to any ministry or nation in the world."

George III. read, and shrugged his shoulders. He did not lose sight of the fact that he had on his side the block and the gallows. He had never loved the Colonies. He had no sympathy with the lofty spirit which inspired such significant language. He could not or would not see that the suspension of trade was the most disinterested expression of a deep sense of wrong. British commerce would be distressed to a certain degree, but England could seek other markets; while the American merchant sacrificed nearly his whole business. Neither did the blind king reflect upon the weak condition of his own war department. British industry at that

Hosted by Google

epoch rendered every able-bodied man of value; hence enlistments in the army were rare. Rank was bestowed by favor, or sold for money. Boys at school not infrequently held commissions. The corrupt system prevailed to such an extent that scarcely a general officer of the day had gained a great name.

Barrington, the military secretary, knowing all this, remonstrated warmly against war. "The contest will cost more than we can gain by success; we have not military strength enough to levy taxes on America," he said. With masterly eloquence, he advised that the troops be at once removed from Boston. A conference was finally arranged between Lord Howe and Franklin, the agent of the Colonies, to learn the best terms of reconciliation with America. Franklin, true to his principles and faithful to Congress, declared, as the only basis of possible harmony, that certain specified obnoxious acts be repealed, and Boston freed from her ignominy. Lord Howe repeated his words to Dartmouth and North, who agreed in the opinion that neither the king nor Parliament would concede so much.

At the opening of Parliament after the holidays the aged Chatham rose, and moved to address the king for "immediate orders to re- 1775. move the forces from the town of Boston." He was keenly alive Jan. 20. to the imminence of the crisis, and his argument teemed with sound logic. He said: —

"My Lords, the means of enforcing thraldom are as weak in practice as they are unjust in principle. General Gage and the troops under his command are penned up, pining in inglorious inactivity. You may call them an army of safety and of guard, but they are in truth an army of impotence; and to make the folly equal to the disgrace, they are an army of irritation. But this tameness, however contemptible, cannot be censured; for the first drop of blood, shed in civil and unnatural war, will make a wound that years, perhaps ages, may not heal. Their force would be most disproportionately exerted against a brave, generous, and united people, with arms in their hands, and courage in their hearts, — three millions of people, the genuine descendants of a valiant and pious ancestry, driven to those deserts by the narrow maxims of a superstitious tyranny. And is the spirit of persecution never to be appeased? Are the brave sons of these brave forefathers to inherit their sufferings as they have inherited their virtues? Are they to sustain the infliction of the most oppressive and unexampled severity? They have been condemned unheard. The indiscriminate hand of vengeance has lumped together innocent and guilty; with all the formalities of hostility, has blocked up the town of Boston, and reduced to beggary and famine thirty thousand inhabitants. This resistance to your arbitrary system of taxation might have been foreseen from the very nature of things and from mankind; above all, from the Whiggish spirit flourishing in that country. The spirit which now resists your taxation in America is the same which

Hosted by Google

formerly opposed loans, benevolence, and ship-money in England; the same which, by the Bill of Rights, vindicated the English Constitution; the same which established the essential maxim of your liberties, that no subject of England shall be taxed but by his own consent. For myself, I must avow, that in all my reading, — and I have read Thucydides and have studied and admired the master-states of the world, — for solidity of reason, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion under a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand in preference to the General Congress at Philadelphia. The histories of Greece and Rome give us nothing equal to it, and all attempts to impose servitude upon such a mighty continental nation must be in vain."

Many of the English statesmen besides Chatham believed that every motive of justice and policy, of dignity and prudence, urged the removal of the troops from Boston; that haughty England would be forced ultimately to retract. The illustrious nobleman's words made a profound impression upon the crowd of Americans who were listening with breathless attention, particularly when he added: —

"If the ministers persevere in thus misadvising and misleading the king, I will not say that the king is betrayed, but I will pronounce that the kingdom is undone; I will not say, that they can alienate the affections of his subjects from his crown, but I will affirm that, the American jewel out of it, they will make the crown not worth his wearing."

Suffolk replied with angry vehemence, boasting that he was one of the first to advise coercive measures, and that the government was resolved to bring the Americans to obedience. Shelburne signified his approval of the sentiments of Chatham "because of their wisdom, justice, and propriety." Camden exclaimed: —

"This I will say, not only as a statesman, politician, and philosopher, but as a common lawyer: My Lords, you have no right to tax America; the natural rights of man and the immutable laws of nature are all with that people. Kings, lords, and commons are fine sounding names; but kings, lords, and commons may become tyrants as well as others; it is as lawful to resist the tyranny of many as of one."

Lord Gower, with a torrent of sneers, declared himself in favor of enforcing every measure. Rochford and others followed, each attacking Chatham with biting sarcasm, and reproaching him with "seeking to spread the fire of sedition." But the greatest statesman of the realm closed the debate, as he had opened it, by insisting on the right of Americans to hold themselves exempt from taxation save by their own consent. His reasoning, the essence of the true spirit of English opinion, availed nothing. His motion was lost by a vote of sixty-eight against eighteen. And the king was well pleased.

Hosted by Google

Attention was at once turned towards severing the chain of union in the Colonies which Chatham had proclaimed as "solid, permanent, and effectual." The ministry fixed their eyes upon New York, which was the central point, geographically, commercially, and financially. New York won over to a separate negotiation, and the backbone of the "rebellion" was broken. Every device was resorted to, and every exertion made to accomplish the desired result. Very little doubt of ultimate success existed in the minds of the king and his influential courtiers. New York had acquired individual strength and stood out alone, a distinct character, as it were, among the colonies. Having no charter, and being the seat of a royal government which dispensed commissions, offices, and immense grants of land, New York was alive for them with signs of promise. A corrupt influence had grown out of contracts for the army; the New York Assembly had been continued from session to session by the king's prerogative for a series of years; New York City was the seat of a chartered college which taught that Christians should be subject to the higher powers, and of the Church of England, whose ministers were strictly loyal; and over and above all, the shadow of a great terror might be turned to account, for the widely scattered and defenseless population of the province shuddered at the possibility of the countless savages being let loose from the north in case of war. It would seem as if New York would accept the olive-branch, and welcome almost any plan of accommodation.

The recent death of Sir William Johnson (July 11, 1774) had created fresh apprehensions in regard to the movements of the Indians. On the very day of his death a congress of six hundred braves were assembled at his baronial hall, and he had spoken two hours with the fire and vivacity of an Iroquois orator, endeavoring to persuade the great sachems of the Six Nations from participating in the bloody war which was then raging fiercely along the savage borders of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, a war which involved their own blood — for Logan was a Mingo chief — and which was marked by atrocities so awful that history recoils from their recital.[1] Sir William was succeeded in his title and estates by his son Sir

[1] This Indian war broke out in February, 1774. Michael Cresap (a young Maryland trader) was at the time clearing an extensive tract of land which he had purchased in that region, with a large force of laborers in his employ. He was considered the bravest man west of the Alleghanies. When hostilities became a fixed fact, he was chosen captain of the militia, and became a terror to the men of the forest. He was young, not over thirty-three years of age; his name has been made familiar to every school-boy for many generations, through the famous speech of Logan, the tall, straight, lithe, athletic, sentimental Indian chief, who, reeking with his own bloody cruelties, defeated, despairing, and for once thoroughly afraid of his resolute foe, burst into a strain of accusation which has been pronounced

Hosted by Google

John Johnson, then thirty-two years of age, who, in 1773, had married Mary, daughter of Hon. John Watts of New York City; but the control of Indian affairs fell into the hands of Colonel Guy Johnson, who was less powerful as well as less popular than his father, and whose efficiency in managing the uneasy savages remained to be proven.

This succession of butcheries which crimsoned the Alleghany and Monongahela Rivers, was virtually brought to an end through the action of the old Seneca warriors in preventing their bloodthirsty young men from rushing to the assistance of the defeated tribes in that extensive wild; but these same suspicious and treacherous beings were now sniffing the rumors of possible civil war among their white brethren, and any prophecy concerning their probable conduct in such an event was idle in the extreme.

Dartmouth quickly ordered the governors of the colonies "to use their utmost endeavors" to prevent the appointment of delegates to the contemplated Congress. Tryon was in England, and the aged Lieutenant-Governor Colden at the head of affairs in New York during his absence. Colden had never swerved for an instant from his allegiance to the crown; he esteemed it a religious duty to obey the instructions of his superiors to the letter. In reply to Dartmouth's communication he wrote, under date of January 4, 1775: —

"Enthusiasm is ever contagious; and when propagated by every artifice becomes almost irresistible. The Assembly of this Province, as I formerly informed your Lordship, are to meet next Tuesday. If I find that there will not be a Majority for prudent measures, I shall incline to prorogue them for a short time, that the Plan of the New Parliament may be known here before the Assembly do anything."

This legislative body was slow in coming together. It was the 26th of January before twenty-one out of thirty members were in their seats. Abraham Ten Broeck immediately moved to take into consideration the acts of the Congress held at Philadelphia in the preceding autumn. He was ably seconded by George Clinton (afterwards

Jan. 26.

the finest specimen of Indian rhetoric and eloquence in the history of the race. It is believed, however, that Captain Cresap, although so notably accused, was in no way responsible for the massacre of the chieftain's family, as he was many hundred miles away at the time of its occurrence. He traveled over the mountains and through the vales of Pennsylvania to the seat of government for instructions, and receiving a royal commission, was one of the efficient officers in Lord Dunmore's expedition against the Western savages in the summer of 1774. A tombstone in Trinity Churchyard marks his resting-place, he having died in New York in the autumn of 1775, while on his way from Boston (where he was captain of a company of riflemen under Washington) to his home in Maryland, his journey from the seat of war having been occasioned by sudden and severe illness.

Hosted by Google

governor of the State of New York), by the brave Philip Schuyler, by Simon Boerum, who had represented King's County since 1761, by the afterwards famous Colonel Woodhull, by Philip Livingston, and, indeed, by nearly all the members who were of Dutch descent. A most intensely exciting debate ensued. The motion, however, was rejected by a vote of eleven against ten.



Portrait of General Philip Schuyler.

The news reaching England, George III. and his ministers became infatuated with their courting scheme. Henceforth no pains must be spared. The game must be well played. Not a trick lost. New York must be secured. Favors and indulgences to the loyal. Praise accorded the good disposition towards reconciliation as shown by the vote of the Assembly. "Ah," said Garnier to Rochford, "that one vote was worth a million sterling." But his tone changed when he was in company with Vergennes, and he explained how that one "insignificant" vote was not worth the counting by the Ministry, for New York was sure to act with the rest of the continent, — she only differed in the modes.

Governor Tryon was ordered to return to New York without delay, and empowered to give "every reasonable satisfaction to England's faithful subjects in New York." Diplomatists were to convey promises to the landed gentry; the chronic disputes in the land department, and boundary difficulties, were to be settled in favor of New York; the claims of New York speculators to Vermont territory, under which populous villages had grown up, were to be supported against the New Hampshire grants; in short, all claims or pretensions were to be honored where the

Hosted by Google

petitioners would pledge themselves not to obstruct the importation or exportation of goods to and from Great Britian. New York was to be excepted from the restraints imposed on the trade and fisheries of the other colonies.

There were hot debates in the New York Assembly, particularly when the question was argued whether delegates should be appointed to the second Congress. It was claimed that the proceedings of the first Congress were violent and treasonable, and, instead of healing the unnatural breach with the mother country, had the effect to widen it immeasurably; that "to repeat the experiment in the present emergency was to be guilty of open treason in the broad light of day." Against a very determined minority the House refused to appoint delegates.

This action was extensively quoted by the hopeful on the other side of the water; and it subjected New York to all manner of unmerited aspersions from the neighboring colonies. But its weight was of little account in the general balance of sentiment. Never was a pivot of the policy of ministers more grievously misunderstood than New York. Never was the character of a community more blunderingly misinterpreted. The foundation of the structure was moderation, inflexibility, and an inherited predilection for republicanism. An ancestry of which New York was proud had proven to the world that a small people under great discouragements could found a republic. The results of the daring and heroism which distinguished the long period of the contest between Holland and Spain were fresh in the public mind; and men reminded each other in their daily walks and conversation how Great Britain herself owed the renovation of her own political system in 1689 to Holland. The New-Yorkers who were actually in sympathy with the British system of ministerial oppression were much fewer than has been generally supposed; and they were found chiefly on the surface. The landed aristocracy were divided; they naturally dreaded the confiscation of their vast estates. But we shall see presently that it was no insignificant proportion of them who nobly risked their wide possessions, whether inherited or accumulated, in the cause of liberty. The mechanics of the city were almost to a man enthusiasts for resistance. They were excitable and headstrong; and men of means and broader intelligence feared that through the very fact that this class had nothing personally to lose, and little care for or conception of possible future events, irreparable mischief might be wrought through their rash perversity.

Notwithstanding the conservative element, and the generally established belief to the contrary, in no American colony was English dominion less welcome than in New York. The reader will observe that with all

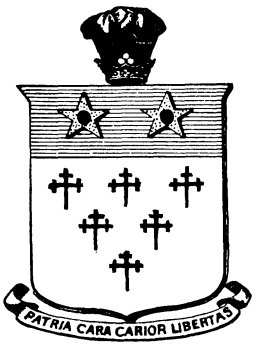
Hosted by Google

the corrupting influences which the ingenuity of a corrupt Ministry could devise bearing down upon her, without any legally constituted body as a rallying point, with perils menacing her on every side, and in defiance of the logic which had been a part of every man's education — that an established government must be sustained — we find New York proceeding exclusively by the methods of revolution, and under circumstances of difficulty which had no parallel in any of the other Colonies. At the critical moment when the king was most obstinately and serenely confident in regard to the future conduct of New York, the Committee of Sixty were laughing at the vote of the Assembly, which by a majority of four refused to forbid importations, and in the very face of this counter-legislative action strictly enforced the non-importation agreement of the condemned Congress. While the smiling monarch was lavishing flattery upon his "well-disposed subjects in New York" and issuing orders that they should be "gratified in every reasonable request," the self-directing Committee of Sixty, wishing to test the real mind of New York concerning the Assembly's refusal to appoint delegates to another Congress, caused a poll to be taken throughout the city, and against one hundred and sixty-three, eight hundred and twenty-five declared in favor of representation. A convention was unhesitatingly summoned to elect the delegates, in which the counties co-operated with the city. On the 20th of April, under the direct gaze of the "supreme legislative government of New York," forty-five undaunted electors chose from among their ranks fourteen delegates for the second Continental Congress. Colden wrote despairingly to Dartmouth: "It is not in the power of government to prevent such measures; they are supported by individuals in their private characters, and do not come within the energy of the laws." April 20.

Several of these newly elected delegates will be recognized as members of the Assembly. Philip Livingston, the great merchant — president of the convention — was the first choice; John Alsop, with immense mercantile interests at stake; Francis Lewis, also a merchant, a man of liberal education and extensive foreign travel; James Duane, a lawyer of large practice and universally conceded abilities; John Jay, already in the front rank among lawyers, scholars, and political economists, despite his brief twenty-nine years; Philip Schuyler, the valiant champion of popular rights in the Assembly; Robert R. Livingston, versatile, brilliant, and influential; George Clinton, as wise in council as he was afterwards gallant in warfare; Henry Wisner, from Orange County, the chief manufacturer of powder for the American army at a later date; Simon Boerum, the assemblyman from King's County during fourteen consecu-

Hosted by Google

tive years[1]; William Floyd, intelligent, active, and discreet[2]; and Lewis Morris, the worthy scion of a powerful family whose influence for more than a century had been arrayed against the arbitrary encroachments of the crown. Thus were the varied interests of New York represented in this important movement towards independence. Men of high moral dignity, of sound discretion, of wealth and position, of active business habits, and cultivated intelligence, men well known and in whom the community trusted, and who were in no humor to shirk responsibility or hasten war, were to take their seats in the second Continental Congress which England had tried in vain to suppress. Their real as well as professed object was to "concert measures for the preservation of American rights, and for the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the Colonies."



Clinton Arms.

New York had as much more at stake than either New England or Virginia, as she was better prepared through generations of schooling in the methods of government to cope with the adversaries of liberty. For upwards of three fourths of a century New York had been steadily advancing upon arbitrary power, while the neighboring colonies were compara-

[1] Simon Boerum was born in Holland in 1724, and came to this country with his parents when quite young. He married Maria Martense Schenck of Flatlands. He was clerk of King's County from 1750 until his death in 1775, and also clerk of the Board of Supervisors some twenty-three years. He owned a considerable tract of land in Brooklyn.

[2] William Floyd was the eldest son of Nicoll Floyd, who was the youngest son of Richard Floyd and Margaret, daughter of Secretary Matthias Nicoll and sister of the famous William Nicoll, patentee of the Islip estate. (Vol. I. pp. 208, 374, 507.) He was born December, 1734. He was major-general of the militia of Suffolk County; member of both the first and second Continental Congresses; signed the Declaration of Independence; and served in the Congress of 1779, and again in 1788, the first Congress which convened in New York after the adoption of the Federal Constitution. He was, in 1777, a member of the first Constitutional Legislature of the State; in 1800 he was one of the Electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, and on several subsequent occasions acted in the same capacity. For a period of more than fifty years he was honored by his fellow-citizens with offices of trust and responsibility. During the war he was driven with his family for shelter to Connecticut, and his elegant mansion was appropriated by the enemy, his produce seized, and his woods cut down. At the end of seven years the soil was nearly all that remained to him. His first wife was Isabella, daughter of William Jones of Southampton, Long Island. His second wife was Joanna, daughter of Benajah Strong of Setauket. His children were Nicoll, who was the father of Hon. John G. Floyd, member of Congress from Oneida; Mary, who married Benjamin Tallmadge of Litchfield, Connecticut, — the mother of Frederick A. and Henry Floyd Tallmadge of New York; Catharine, who married Rev. William Clarkson; Ann, who married George W. Clinton, son of the vice-president, and for her second husband Abraham Varick; and Eliza, who married James Platt of Utica, New York. *Thompson's Long Island*, Vol. II. 431.

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google



"A horseman, riding furiously down the Bowery Road into Broadway, reined in his steed here and there to recite the events of Wednesday, the 19th of April, to little groups of Sunday worshippers." Page 21.

Google

tively at rest under well-defined chartered rights. The question whether English or French civilization should control in the development of the American continent had been chiefly determined by New York; and the principles which underlie our republican institutions had first found expression in New York. In short, the tree of freedom had been planted in the Empire State long before the little plantation of a Dutch mercantile company had come under kingly rule; it had taken firm root; it had grown rank despite the frosts of severe displeasure, sometimes shooting forth its branches in one direction and sometimes in another, putting out a leaf here and a leaf there, and finally budding and blooming under the stray sunbeams of a living affection for liberty even while constantly assailed by storms of foreign wrath; and now its ripening fruit is falling — into its neighbors' fields, indeed, who, with their baskets ready, hasten to gather it in.

The New York Convention adjourned on Saturday. The quiet of the next morning (Sunday) was broken by the startling news of the battle of Lexington. As the people were assembling for morning service in the various churches of the metropolis, a horseman, riding furiously down the Bowery Road into Broadway, reined in his steed here and there to recite the events of Wednesday, the 19th of April, to little groups of Sunday worshipers on the street. Written documents, authenticated by the chief men of all the prominent towns he had passed through from Boston to New York, confirmed his every statement. Amazement, alarm, and indignation took possession of the public mind. The British army had attempted to seize and destroy the military supplies at Concord; an ill-advised and inglorious expedition had resulted in a chapter of horrors with which the world is familiar, and in the ignominious flight of well-trained troops before an outraged people! The king's army at this moment were closely beleaguered in Boston with no mode of exit except by the sea!

April 22.

April 23.

New York was aflame with excitement. The news traveled with the speed of a whirlwind, and the whole city before noon seemed to have risen in resentment. Men hurried to and fro, women were met weeping on the sidewalks, the churches were deserted in the great feverish impulse to learn the miserable truth, and the dinner-hour was forgotten. Although it was the Sabbath, men in a body took possession of the City Hall, and armed themselves with the munitions it contained. Two vessels laden with flour and supplies for the British troops at Boston, just upon the eve of sailing, were at once boarded by an impromptu force, headed by Isaac Sears and John Lamb, and the cargoes, to the value of eighty thousand pounds, swiftly unloaded. All vessels about to sail for any of the British

Hosted by Google

possessions were detained. The royal government was powerless in New York; the people ruled the hour. The keys of the custom-house were demanded and the officers dismissed.

On Monday, while volunteer companies paraded Broadway in defiance of the administration, the Committee of Sixty met in earnest con-
April 24. sultation; being invested with no special power except in regard to the non-importation agreement, a new committee with wider authority seemed indispensable. Hence the following call was issued:—

NEW-YORK, COMMITTEE-CHAMBER, WEDNESDAY, 26th April, 1775.

THE Committee having taken into Conſideration the Commotions occaſioned by the ſanguinary Meaſures purſued by the Britiſh Miniſtry, and that the Powers with which this Committee is inveſted, reſpect only the Aſſociation, are unanimouſly of Opinion, That a new Committee be elected by the Freeholders and Freemen of this City and County, for the preſent unhappy Exigency of Affairs, as well as to obſerve the Conduct of all Perſons touching the Aſſociation; That the ſaid Committee conſiſt of 100 Perſons; that 33 be a Quorum, and that they diſſolve within a Fortnight next after the End of the next Seſſions of the Continental Congreſs. And that the Senſe of the Freeholders and Freemen of this City and County, upon this Subject, may be better procured and aſcertained, the Committee are further unanimouſly of Opinion, That the Polls be taken on Friday Morning next, at 9 o'Clock, at the uſual Places of Election in each Ward, under the Inſpection of the two Veſtrymen of each Ward, and two of this Committee, or any two of the four; and that at the ſaid Elections the Votes of the Freemen and Freeholders, be taken on the following Queſtions, viz. Whether ſuch New Committee ſhall be conſtituted; and if *Yea*, of whom it ſhall conſiſt. And this Committee is further unanimouſly of Opinion, That at the preſent alarming Juncture, it is highly adviſeable that a Provincial Congreſs be immediately ſummoned; and that it be recommended to the Freeholders and Freemen of this City and County, to chooſe at the ſame Time that they vote for the New Committee aforeſaid, Twenty Deputies to repreſent them at the ſaid Congreſs. And that a Letter be forthwith prepared and diſpatched to all the Counties, requeſting them to unite with us in forming a Provincial Congreſs, and to appoint their Deputies without Delay, to meet at New-York, on Monday the 22d of May next.

By Order of the Committee,

ISAAC LOW, *Chairman.*

Hosted by Google

The counties of New York had many of them prior to this call assured the public through the press of their willingness to stand or fall with American liberty.[1] Hitherto there had been no occasion for the appointment of a Provincial Congress in New York. It was supposed that such a movement would obstruct all business, prevent the collection of debts, destroy the liberty of the press, and involve the country in distress. But with the shifting scenes minor considerations were overlooked, and one grand impulse seemed to inspire action. While the war-message was speeding from village to village through New England, and the population responding in a manner which has found no parallel in history, New York unhesitatingly took another firm, unfaltering step in the direction of Independence.

Through the length and breadth of New England no time was consumed in asking if resistance were practicable; no delay for the want of a union formed or leaders proclaimed. Men hurried from the fields, the work-shops, and the barns, and ministers came from their studies,[2] every one with a gun, and a bit of lunch in his hat or pocket; possibly a few necessaries packed in a pillow-case by wife or daughter. In some towns, companies were organized after a fashion on the village green. For the most part the enlistments were on the prime condition of individual convenience or pleasure. Thus the volunteer was as free to go away as to

[1] A humorous writer of the day, after recording the action of the inhabitants of Duchess County in refusing to subscribe to the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, thus ridicules the "advocates of ministerial oppression" who were at the same time assembled in Convention: "After business, then a dinner, which is to consist of many dishes, but I cannot pretend to express the sumptuousness nor variety of them; there is, however, to be good English roast-beef, ewe mutton, and lamb, both roast and boiled, and all well seasoned with certain spices brought from the East Indies; next is to come a pompous pye, on one side of which is to be seen a viper, and on the other a pigeon, both curiously formed in paste, denoting the wisdom of the serpent and the innocence of the dove, and on the top a cormorant, with a ministerial mandate in his mouth; the salad is to consist entirely of *celery* and *penny-royal*, which it is expected the guests will devour very greedily. But how vain would it be to attempt a description of the whole entertainment; all will be elegant, sumptuous, and polite, though there will be no dessert; as for the wines, they are to be particularly such as have been lately imported from Maderia or the Western Islands, if such are to be had; for you must know that they intend to eat and drink what they please, consistent with the laws of the land; notwithstanding the Association entered into by the Continental Congress. Towards evening the TEA-table, with all its equippages and appurtenances, is to be brought in; the landlady will be confoundedly puzzled to suit the company, as there 's no India Company's TEA to be had, and TEA they will have, notwithstanding this meeting is to be after the first day of March. What then is to be done? Why, give us Dutch TEA, if you have no other. How comfortable to the more ignorant part of the Convention, who have been drawn in to sign the creed, to see their leaders indulge in diversions and pleasures, which is a sure sign that the ship is safe, and in a calm." *New York Gazette*, March 20, 1775.

[2] In Danvers, Asa Putnam, a deacon of the church, was chosen Captain of the minute-men and Rev. Mr. Wadsworth, the pastor, was made his First Lieutenant.

Hosted by Google

rush into the fray. There were no uniforms, and no equipments. On the soldiers' rapid march to the seat of the disturbance the inhabitants along the route gladly spread their tables, and all things were in common. The British officers were confounded when they saw the besiegers perched in Cambridge as a central camp, with wide-spread wings stretching from Chelsea on the left, almost round to Dorchester on the right, covering about three quarters of a circle of headlands, slopes, peninsulas, and eminences, themselves thus hemmed in by an unorganized, fluctuating mass of humanity filled with the spirit and intent of a military host. The bitter mortification of the proud and most experienced soldiers of the English realm, freshly laureled in recent wars, was only equaled by the sufferings which came with their confinement, since their magazines were unfilled, and supplies of every description were cut off, rendering their diet unwholesome and meager. They were rich in every form of water-craft, ships of war, gun-boats, transports, floats, and barges; but even with these they could not venture near the shore of main or island. The tide-soaked marshes between the two combating forces then doubled the present width of the rivers; and there were no bridges in the region, save on the side of Cambridge towards Brighton. The salt flats had no causeways over them, and the only route between any two places was by a long detour. The chief roads and all the high points were cautiously guarded. Hence the humiliated generals of England's monarch saw no way out of their disgraceful dilemma, until reinforcements should reach them from the other side of the Atlantic. General Gage, at the solicitation of some of the leading citizens of Boston assembled in Faneuil Hall, agreed to allow such of the people as desired, to remove from the city, if they would leave their arms behind them and covenant to abstain altogether from hostilities. Many of the suffering and frightened families, whose means of procuring food were made precarious by the seige, availed themselves of the permission. But their effects were subjected to a rigid examination; and presently the devoted loyalists, of whom there were not a few, objected to the liberty afforded their neighbors of removal, under whatever circumstances, as it would furnish the provincials more excuse for violence should they attack the city. There were timid neutrals, and there were spies, who remained quietly in Boston. These latter watched all movements and communicated with their friends outside. The population of Boston, independent of the military, was then about eighteen thousand. The town of Charlestown, which lay under the British guns, contained some two or three thousand souls. The interruption of employment brought poverty, and the people fled from Charlestown in every direction, until there were less than two hundred remaining.

Hosted by Google

The colonial forces were loosely officered, and under no national authority whatsoever. No war had been declared, and there was no nation to declare war. The Continental Congress had not as yet decided upon the need of an army. They had no munitions of war nor the means with which to procure them. A self-constituted Provincial Congress discharged legislative functions in Massachusetts, and a Committee of Safety directed in military affairs. A Council of War was also instituted, with an undefined range as to advice and authority, sometimes mischievously interfering with or confusing the arrangements and measures of the Committee of Safety. The field officers held place and rank according to the inclination and partialities of the privates, and were liable to be superseded or disobeyed at any moment.[1] Indeed, the fighting elements, drawn together by the excitement of the hour, were subject to discord and disintegration, and could act in concert only by yielding themselves to the influence of the spirit which had wrenched them from their various occupations at the busiest season of the year. They did not feel their lack of discipline nor realize its probable consequences. They were restless under restraint, and eager for action. In the Committee of Safety and in the Council of War there were directing minds, and a wide difference of opinion, as to the safe and expedient course to be pursued. Daring enterprises were discussed, but little could be attempted while there was hardly powder enough in the camp for a successful target expedition.[2]

In accordance with the call, New York city and county elected, on May 1, a new Committee of One Hundred to control in all general affairs[3]; and as the powers of the Convention (so recently in session) had expired with the choice of delegates to the Continental Con- May 1.

[1] *History of the Battle of Bunker's (Breed's) Hill*, by George E. Ellis.

[2] Lord Mahon's *History of England*, 64, 65, 66.

[3] The following are the names of the Committee of One Hundred chosen in this emergency: —

1. Isaac Low.
2. Philip Livingston.
3. James Duane.
4. John Alsop.
5. John Jay.
6. Peter V. B. Livingston.
7. Isaac Sears.
8. David Johnson.
9. Alexander McDougall.
10. Thomas Randall.
11. Leonard Lispenard.
12. William Walton.
13. John Broom.
14. Joseph Hallett.
15. Gabriel H. Ludlow.
16. Nicholas Hoffman.
17. Abraham Walton.
18. Peter Van Schaack.
19. Henry Remsen.
20. Peter T. Curtenius.
21. Abraham Brasher.
22. Abraham P. Lott.
23. Abraham Duryee.
24. Joseph Bull.
25. Francis Lewis.
26. Joseph Totten.
27. Thomas Ivers.
28. Hercules Mulligan.
29. John Anthony.
30. Francis Bassett.
31. Victor Bicker.
32. John White.
33. Theophilus Anthony.
34. William Goforth.
35. William Denning.
36. Isaac Roosevelt.
37. Jacob Van Voorhees.
38. Jeremiah Platt.
39. Comfort Sands.
40. Robert Benson.
41. William W. Gilbert.
42. John Berrien.

Hosted by Google

gress,[1] all parts of the colony of New York had been summoned, and at the same time (May 1) elected delegates to represent them in a Provincial Congress.

Eighty-three members of the new Committee of One Hundred met as soon as chosen; and on the motion of John Morin Scott, seconded by Alexander MacDougall, an association was projected, engaging under all the ties of religion, honor, and love of country, to submit to committees and to Congress, to withhold supplies from British troops, and at the risk of lives and fortunes to repel every attempt at enforcing taxation by Parliament. Colden described in a letter to Dartmouth, under date of May 3, how the people of New York had "entirely prostrated the powers of Government, and produced an association by which this Province has solemnly united with the others in resisting the Acts of Parliament."

May 5. On the 5th of May a packet sailed for England. Among the passengers were two agents sent by the counselors of the disabled government of New York, to represent to the Ministry how severely the rash conduct of the army at Boston had injured the cause of the king. The Committee of One Hundred addressed by the same vessel the mayor and corporation of London, and through them the capital of the British Empire and people of Great Britain, saying: —

"This country will not be deceived by measures conciliatory in appearance. America is grown so irritable by oppression, that the least shock, in any part, is, by the most powerful sympathetic affection, instantaneously felt through

43. Gabriel W. Ludlow.
44. Nicholas Roosevelt.
45. Edward Fleming.
46. Lawrence Embree.
47. Samuel Jones.
48. John DeLancey.
49. Frederic Jay.
50. William W. Ludlow.
51. John B. Moore.
52. Rudolphus Ritzind.
53. Lindley Murray.
54. Lancaster Burling.
55. John Lasher.
56. George Janaway.
57. James Beekman.
58. Samuel Verplanck.
59. Richard Yates.
60. David Clarkson.
61. Thomas Smith.
62. James Desbrosses.
63. Augustus Van Horn.
64. Garrat Keteltas.
65. Eleazer Miller.
66. Benjamin Kissam.
67. John Morin Scott.
68. Cornelius Clopper.
69. John Read.
70. John Van Cortlandt.
71. Jacobus Van Zandt.
72. Gerardus Duyckinck.
73. Peter Goelet.
74. John Marston.
75. Thomas Marston.
76. John Morton.
77. George Folliot.
78. Jacobus Lefferts.
79. Richard Sharp.
80. Hamilton Young.
81. Abraham Brinkerhoff.
82. Benjamin Helme.
83. Walter Franklin.
84. David Beekman.
85. William Seton.
86. Evert Banker.
87. Robert Ray.
88. Mich[ls] Bogert (Broadway).
89. William Laight.
90. Samuel Broom.
91. John Lamb.
92. Daniel Phœnix.
93. Anthony Van Dam.
94. Daniel Dunscomb.
95. John Imlay.
96. Oliver Templeton.
97. Lewis Pintard.
98. Cornelius P. Low.
99. Thomas Buchannan.
100. Petrus Byvank.

[1] *Journal of the Provincial Convention, New York Hist. Soc.*

Hosted by Google

the whole continent. The city (of New York) are as one man in the cause of liberty; our inhabitants are resolutely bent on supporting their committee, and the intended Provincial and Continental Congresses; there is not the least doubt of the efficacy of their example in the other counties. In short, while the whole continent ardently wishes for peace upon such terms as can be acceded to by Englishmen, they are indefatigable in preparing for the last appeal.

"We speak the real sentiments of the confederated Colonies, from Nova Scotia to Georgia, when we declare that all the horrors of civil war will never compel America to submit to taxation by authority of Parliament."

These brave words were written in the full light of the knowledge that there were not five hundred pounds of powder in the length and breadth of the metropolis, that British troops were already ordered to New York, that it was commanded by Brooklyn Heights, and that the deep water of its harbor exposed it on both sides to ships of war. The letter was signed by eighty-nine of the One Hundred, of whom the first was John Jay.

The following day the delegates from Massachusetts and Connecticut to the Continental Congress at Philadelphia drew near; they were met on Murray Hill, three miles from the city, by a company of grenadiers, and a regiment of the city militia under arms, and by carriages and a cavalcade, and many thousands of persons on foot; and along roads which were crowded as if the whole city had turned out to do them honor, and amid shouts and huzzas, the ringing of bells and every demonstration of joy, they made their entry into New York, where they spent the Sabbath. May 6.

On Monday, two days later, they were joined by several of the New York delegates, and with great ceremony escorted by several hundred of the militia under arms, and by a much larger number of patriotic citizens, across the water on their way to Philadelphia, pausing in Newark and Elizabethtown, where triumphal honors awaited them. May 8.

Events followed each other with the swiftness of the whirlwind. Rev. Myles Cooper, the second President of King's College, who had been elected to that honorable position in 1763, while only twenty-eight years of age, had been writing for the press with great force and elegance of diction, on the subject of colonial relation to England. A tract had recently appeared from his pen entitled "A Friendly Address to all Reasonable Americans on the Subject of our Political Confusions." His habits and opinions had been fashioned from the old Oxford pattern, and the popular party were not in any humor to tolerate his scholarly arguments against opposing the king's troops. On the night of the 10th of May a mob forcibly entered his lodging in the college with mur- May 10.

Hosted by Google

der intent. A student warning him in time, he escaped, half-dressed, by jumping over the college fence, and found shelter in the house of one of the Stuyvesants until he could reach a vessel bound for England.[1]

John Holt, who edited the *New York Journal*, was one of the most fearless of printers; having in 1774 discarded the arms of the king as an ornamental heading for his paper, and substituted the device of a snake cut into parts, with "Unite or die" for a motto, he about this time issued the snake joined and coiled, with the tail in its mouth, forming a double ring; within the coil was a pillar standing on Magna Carta, surmounted with the cap of Liberty.



Holt's Snake Device.

As the delegates of New England and New York were traveling through New Jersey and bearing with them to their goal the sense of the population as well as the declaration of the New Jersey Assembly "to abide by the united voice of the Continental Congress," a scheme, discussed in private by Adams and Hancock with the governor and council of Connecticut while in Hartford a few days before, was taking effect in a master stroke of military policy. A party of volunteers under the command of Ethan Allen were on the march towards Ticonderoga. They were chiefly from Salisbury, Berkshire, and Bennington, having been fitted out from the funds in the Connecticut treasury. In the gray of the morning of that eventful 10th of May which inaugurated the opening of the second Continental Congress, the fortress of Ticonderoga, which cost England eight million pounds sterling, a succession of campaigns, and an immense amount of human life, fell into the hands of the Americans after a siege of ten minutes, without the loss of a single man.

May 10.

Allen's party numbered eighty-three; they broke through the closed gate of the fort, disarmed the guards, raising at the same instant the Indian war-whoop, — such an unnatural yell as had not been heard in all that region since the days of Montcalm, — and formed on the parade in hollow square so as to face each of the barracks. One of the sentries, after receiving a slight wound, cried for quarter, and guided Allen to the apartment of the commanding officer.

"Come forth instantly, or I will sacrifice the whole garrison!" Allen shouted through the door.

[1] Rev. Myles Cooper, LL. D., was born in England in 1735. He was educated at Oxford, and afterwards made a Fellow of Queen's College. He published an octavo volume of poems in 1761. He enjoyed a distinguished reputation for scholarship. After his escape to England he was made pastor of the First Episcopal Chapel in Edinburgh, where he died in 1785. His portrait is preserved in Columbia College; he is said to have borne a striking resemblance to the poet Dryden.

Hosted by Google

Delaplace, the commander, appeared undressed, with his garments in his hand.

"Deliver to me the fort instantly!" was the salutation with which he was welcomed.

"By what authority?" he asked in amazement.

"In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!" was the quick response.

Delaplace attempted to speak again, but was peremptorily interrupted by Allen, who flourished a drawn sword over his head. Seeing no alternative, Delaplace surrendered the garrison, and ordered his men to be paraded without arms.

With the fortress were captured fifty prisoners, more than a hundred pieces of cannon, one thirteen-inch mortar, and a number of swivels, stores and small arms. Crown Point was taken a little later by a detachment under Seth Warner, the garrison of twelve men surrendering upon the first summons. And furthermore, the only British vessel on Lake Champlain yielded to the bravery of Benedict Arnold. Alas! Great Britain was actually at war with herself.

And now all eyes were turned towards the Congress at Philadelphia. A more doubtful body of men was probably never convened since the world was made. They could copy nothing past, be guided by no precedent, proceed not after the manner of great inventors, but depend entirely upon the gradual unfolding of the internal necessity of the community. They had no place of meeting, but were indebted to the courtesy of the carpenters of the Quaker City for the use of the hall wherein they held their sessions; they had no treasury; they had no authority to levy taxes or to borrow money; they had no soldiers enlisted, and not one civil or military officer to carry out their orders; they were not an executive government, they were not even a legislative body; they had no powers save those of counsel. They represented simply the unformed opinions of an unformed people.

The thirteen American provinces were inhabited by men of French, Dutch, Swedish, and German ancestry, as well as English. This new directing intelligence must respect the masses, one fifth of whom had for their mother tongue some other language than the Anglo-Saxon. They must not ignore the Quakers, who considered it wicked to fight; nor yet the Calvinists, whose religious creed encouraged resistance to tyranny. They must remember the freeholders, whose pride in their liberties and confidence in their power to defend the lands which their own hands had subdued rendered them impatient and headstrong; and also the merchants, whose ships and treasures were afloat, and who dreaded war as the

Hosted by Google

foreshadowing of their own bankruptcy. The immediate declaration of independence was an impossibility. Massachusetts, almost exclusively of British origin, might reach a result with short time for reflection. Congress must take a broader view. Not only the various nationalities, but the religious creeds, numerous as embraced by all Europe, must be molded into something like unity before the American mind could be liberated from allegiance to the past and enlisted in the formation of one great state. A creative impulse waited for the just solution of an intricate problem. Time and circumstances were to foster a sublime sentiment superior to race or language. Meantime it was the sense of oppression rather than exalted love for country which now ruled the multitude. The members of Congress saw with fatal clearness the total want of any preparation for war. The narrow powers with which they were intrusted by their constituents argued forcibly against any change, where change was not demanded by instant necessity. They were divided and undecided. They resisted every forward movement, and made none but by compulsion. And yet it was their glorious office, through the natural succession of inevitable events, to cement a union and constitute a nation.

May 11. On the following day the New York Committee of One Hundred addressed lieutenant-governor Colden in a carefully worded and dignified document, setting forth how the city and county, as well as the rest of the Colony of New York, had waited with patience, in vain, for "a redress of the many unconstitutional burdens under which the whole continent had groaned for many years," and that at this most interesting crisis, when their all was at stake, and the sword drawn by the administration against the people of Massachusetts for asserting their invaluable rights, the common inheritance of all Britons, whether in England or America, they had proceeded to associate in the common cause, and claimed as their birthright a total exemption from all taxes, internal or external, by authority of Parliament. At the same time they were deeply concerned in regard to the mischief and bloodshed which would ensue from the encampment of British troops in the city of New York, and besought Colden to apply to General Gage for orders to prevent the landing of such as were on the sea bound for this port, and daily expected.

The final paragraph of the communication was as follows: —

"Give us leave, Sir, to conclude by assuring you, that we are determined to improve that confidence with which the People have honored us, in strengthening the hand of the civil Magistrate in every lawfull measure calculated to promote the Peace and just Rule of this metropolis, and consistent with that jealous attention which above all things we are bound to pay to the violated Rights of America."

Hosted by Google

Colden replied May 13, saying, he could not conceive upon what grounds a suspicion was entertained that the city of New York was to be reduced to the present state of Boston. He denied having had the least intimation that any "regular troops were destined for this province." And he specially exhorted the committee to carry into effect their assurances of strengthening the hands of the civil magistrates, adding: "Let this be done immediately, and with impartial firmness on every occasion; that the houses, persons, and property of your fellow-citizens may not be attacked with impunity, and every degree of domestic security and happiness sapped to its foundation." May 13.

The Provincial Congress assembled in the city May 23. Colden wrote to Dartmouth shortly afterward: —

"You will not be surprised to hear that congresses and committees are established in this government and acting with all the confidence and authority of a legal government. The Provincial Congress of this province, now setting, consists of upwards of one hundred members. The city committee and sub-committees in the country places are likewise kept up; that the new plan of government may be complete for the carrying into execution the determination of the Continental and Provincial Congresses."

The names of those who organized themselves into a legislative body at this critical juncture reveal much more of the real republican spirit which pervaded New York, than shining narrations of riotous outbreaks from gifted pens.[1] Many of them are already associated in the reader's mind with the most important events of colonial New York. Others

[1] Members of the First Provincial Congress which met in New York City, May 23, 1775.

Isaac Low,
Peter Van Brugh Livingston,
Alexander McDougall,
Leonard Lispenard,
Joseph Hallett,
Abraham Walton,
Abraham Brasier,
Isaac Roosevelt,
John De Lancey,
James Beekman,
Samuel Verplanck,
Richard Yates,
David Clarkson,
Thomas Smith,
Benjamin Kissam,
John Morin Scott,
John Van Cortlandt,
Jacobus Van Zandt,
John Marston,

George Folliot,
Walter Franklin,
For City & County of N. Y.

Robert Yates,
Abraham Yates,
Volkert P. Douw,
Jacob Cuyler,
Peter Silvester,
Dirck Swart,
Walter Livingston,
Robert Van Rensselaer,
Henry Glen,
Abraham Ten Broeck,
Francis Nicoll,
For City & County of Albany.

Dirck Brinckerhoff,
Anthony Hoffman,

Zephaniah Platt,
Richard Montgomery,
Ephraim Paine,
Gilbert Livingston,
Jonathan Landon,
Gysbert Schenck,
Melancton Smith,
Nathaniel Sackett,
For Duchess County.

Colonel Johannes Hardenburgh,
Colonel James Clinton,
Christopher Tappan,
John Nicholson,
Jacob Hoornbeck,
For Ulster County.

John Coe,
David Pye,
For Orange County.

Hosted by Google

were borne by influential private citizens and wealthy business men, who, although indisposed to hasten acts of violence, coolly imperiled their all by such unusual proceedings. Benjamin Kissam, for instance, was an educated and able lawyer, in whose office John Jay and Lindley Murray had been law-students together. He was a man of sterling qualities, and one who commanded universal respect. His wife was Catharine Rutgers. He and his family were on terms of special social intimacy with William Livingston; and he was one of the famous coterie of lawyers — the "Moot"[1] — which met to discuss legal questions only, of which Livingston was president, and such men as James Duane, Robert R. Livingston, Egbert Benson, Whitehead Hicks, William Wickham, Gouverneur Morris, John Jay, William Smith, Richard Morris, Samuel Jones, Stephen De Lancey, John Morin Scott, and John Watts, Jr., regular attendants. His brother, Daniel Kissam, was also an eminent lawyer and a judge in Queen's County, where he married Mary Betts. The Kissams were of purely English origin, the first of the name having early settled in Flushing,[2] and in the various generations since have perhaps contributed more valuable men to the legal and medical professions than any other of the old New York families.

Michael Jackson,
Benjamin Tusteen,
Peter Clowes,
William Allison,
For Goshen County.

Colonel Nathaniel Woodhull,
John Sloss Hobart,
Thomas Tredwell,
John Foster,
Ezra L'Hommedieu,
Thomas Wickham,
James Havens,
Selah Strong,
For Suffolk County.

Gouverneur Morris,
Lewis Graham,
James Van Cortlandt,
Stephen Ward,
Joseph Drake,
Philip Van Cortlandt,
James Holmes,
David Dayton,
John Thomas, Jr.,
Robert Graham,
William Paulding,
For Westchester County.

Henry Williams,
Jeremiah Remsen,
For Brooklyn, King's County.

Paul Michean,
John Journey,
Aaron Cortelyou,
Richard Conner,
Richard Lawrence,
For Richmond County.

[1] See Vol. I., 644 (note). The discussions were conducted with great gravity; and it is traditionary that the conclusions reached were considered as settling the law on those points, thus giving to the "Moot" the character of a court of the last resort.

[2] John Kissam, the common ancestor of the family in America, married Susannah Thorne, and settled in Flushing, Long Island. Daniel, his son, married Elizabeth Combs; their children were, Daniel, Joseph, Elizabeth, Hannah, and Martha. Daniel (2d) married Ann Mott, and Joseph (1st) married Deborah Whitehead; the children of the latter were, Daniel Whitehead (who married Ann Duryea), Joseph (2d), Benjamin (the lawyer referred to above), Daniel and Samuel. Benjamin Kissam and Catharine Rutgers had five sons (two of whom, Benjamin and Richard S., were educated at Edinburgh, and became distinguished physicians in New York, Dr. Benjamin being "Professor of the Institute of Medicine" in Columbia College from 1785 to 1792, a trustee of the college, vestryman of Trinity Church, etc.), and one daughter, Helena, who married Philip Hoffman, and was the great-grandmother of ex-Governor John T. Hoffman. Samuel Kissam, a brother of Benjamin and Daniel, received the first degree of M. D. conferred in this country by King's College (in 1769), and became a celebrated physician in the West Indies.

Hosted by Google

Jacobus Van Zandt represented an opulent family of as purely Holland origin, the ancestors of whom were men of note on the Continent. Wynant Van Zandt, styled "gentleman" in the records, held important trusts under Charles I. In 1638 he was commissioned by that monarch as agent for England of the city of Amsterdam, to act in connection with the British minister in regard to certain matters of moment. The first of the name settled in New York about 1682.[1] His son Wynant, educated in Europe, married a Dutch lady; their home in William Street for a decade was one of refinement and luxury, many relics of which in old and elaborately wrought silver, a carved chair of state, etc., are still preserved, as well as the portraits from which the above sketches are copied. They had six sons, of whom Jacobus,[2] the elder, occupied the old homestead in 1775. Fired with the true Dutch spirit in which he had been bred, he was quickly ranked among those who declared for resistance, and was a most useful member of this Congress.



Portrait of Wynant Van Zandt.
From an original painting in possession of the family.

[1] Johannes Van Zandt married Margareta Van der Voel in 1681, and emigrated from the city of Anheim, Holland, to New York, in 1682. His son, Wynant (of the sketch), was born in New York in 1683, and died in 1763. Wynant's son Wynant was born in 1730, and died in 1814. And Wynant, son of Wynant (2d), was born in 1767, and died in 1831. Thus there were three Wynant Van Zandts in Old New York, all men of wealth and worth in their generation. Also Wynant, grandson of Wynant (3d), and his son Wynant of to-day. The full-length portraits of Wynant Van Zandt and his beautiful wife (painted holding a tulip in her hand) were on exhibition at Peale's Museum at the time of the great fire.

[2] Jacobus was surgeon in the army under Washington at Valley Forge and Trenton, and

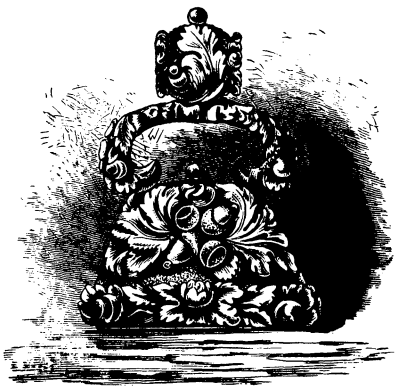
Hosted by Google

David Clarkson, second son of Hon. David Clarkson, so long active in New York city affairs, was a grandson of the Matthew Clarkson, notable as Secretary of the Province, whose father was an eminent English divine and whose mother was of royal descent.[1] David (2d) was one of the substantial men of the city at this period,— widely known and widely honored, middle-aged, rich without pride, and liberal without ostentation. He, like his father before him, had been educated in Europe



Portrait of Mrs. Wynant Van Zandt.
From an original painting in possession of the family.

served honorably his country throughout the Revolution. His wife and beautiful daughter, Catharine (born in 1760), fled to Morristown, New Jersey, during the occupation of New York by the English. It was this Miss Van Zandt who was one of the leading belles at the Inauguration Ball of our first President, and married, in 1788, James Homer Maxwell, son of the founder of the first banking establishment in New York. In 1796, Louis Philippe, while in New York, was entertained by Wynant Van Zandt (3d), and after his return to France wrote an autograph letter of thanks for the hospitality shown him, sending at the same time to Van Zandt a beautiful watch-seal as a token of appreciation and remembrance, of which the sketch is a careful copy.



Watch Seal.
A Gift from Louis Philippe d'Orleans to Wynant Van Zandt in 1796.

[1] Rev. David Clarkson was born at Bradford, England, in 1622, and completed his studies at Cambridge University about 1642. He

Hosted by Google

and seen much of the world. He married, in 1749, Elizabeth French, the sister of Mrs. William Livingston and Mrs. David Van Horne. Shortly afterward he built upon the Clarkson property, corner of Whitehall and Pearl streets, an elegant mansion, which was considered at the time an "ornament" to the metropolis, but which was swept away by the great fire of 1776. It was sumptuously furnished, some of the European importations consisting of beautiful curtains, and stuffed sofas and easy-chairs (made in London), "mirrors in carved gold frames," works of art, portraits, ancient relics, fine table-service in costly porcelain, cut glass, and silver plate, and a library embracing the popular novels and standard works of the day.[1] The household servants, as in many other of the New

married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Henry Holcraft, Knight, M. P., etc., and Lettice, daughter of Francis, Lord Aungier, who was of the same family as the sovereigns of England. Their son, Matthew Clarkson, was appointed Secretary of the Province of New York under William and Mary, and in 1692, January 19, married Catharine, daughter of Hon. Goosen Gerritse Van Schaick of Albany. (Vol. I. 370. *The Clarksons of New York*, Vol. I. 126.) The Van Schaicks were one of the important Dutch families of New York. One of Mrs. Clarkson's sisters, Gerritje, born 1658, married Andries Drayer, Rear-Admiral in the Danish navy, and their daughter, Anna Dorothea, married the Rev. Thomas Barclay, and they were the ancestors of the Barclays of New York. Another sister, Engeltje, born in 1659, married the famous Colonel Peter Schuyler, first Mayor of Albany. Another sister, Margreta, born in 1665, married in 1705 the Rev. Bernardus Freeman, whose only child became the wife of her cousin, the Hon. David Clarkson. And still another sister, Anna Maria, married John Van Cortlandt, son of the Hon. Stephanus Van Cortlandt, and their daughter Gertrude married Philip Verplanck.

Secretary Matthew Clarkson's children were: 1, Elizabeth, died in infancy; 2, DAVID, born in 1694, married Ann Margaret Freeman in 1724, and died April 7, 1751; 3, Levinus, born 1696, died in Holland, unmarried, October 6, 1769; 4, Matthew, born 1699, married in 1718 to Cornelia De Peyster, daughter of Johannes De Peyster; among their descendants have been many eminent personages, as, for instance, Matthew Clarkson, Mayor of Philadelphia and Member of Congress; Gerardus Clarkson, a prominent physician; Rev. Dr. Howard Crosby, Chancellor of the University of New York; Rev. Dr. Robert Harper Clarkson of the Episcopate of Nebraska; and Anna, who died in Holland unmarried. In 1718 the three brothers mentioned, David, Levinus, and Matthew, were established as merchants in London, Amsterdam, and New York respectively. David in the course of six years returned, married as above, and settled in New York. He was in five successive Assemblies (1739–1751), and was one of the most tenacious in his constantly expressed opinion that the colonists were entitled to *all* the privileges of Englishmen, and was in every instance on the side of resistance when the liberties of the people came in question. His children were: 1, Freeman, died in 1770, unmarried; 2, DAVID, born 1726, married Elizabeth French, died 1782; 3, Matthew, died young; 4, Streatfield, died young; 5, Matthew, born 1733, married Elizabeth De Peyster, daughter of Treasurer Abraham De Peyster, in 1758, died in 1772; 6, Levinus, born 1737, died young; 7, Levinus, born 1740, married Mary Van Horne, died 1798.

[1] In one of the private letters of Mr. Clarkson to a friend in England in 1767, he requests the gentleman's wife to buy for Mrs. Clarkson "twenty-four yards of best bright blue satin, and a fashionable winter cloak of crimson satin for her own use"; also, "a handsome silver bread-basket, openwork, light and thin, with the crest, a griffin's head, upon it"; a carpet was at the same time ordered with a green ground. David Clarkson and his wife, Elizabeth

Hosted by Google

York families of the time, were chiefly negro slaves. The summer residence of the family was at Flatbush, Long Island. David Clarkson was one of those who advanced money to the state and city for revolutionary purposes, and his two sons, David and Matthew (the former twenty-four and the latter nineteen), were among the foremost to offer their lives in fighting the battles of the country; Matthew was early appointed an aide-de-camp to General Arnold.

A more peculiar condition of human affairs was never chronicled than at this juncture. In defiance of kingly authority a Continental Congress was in session which recognized the existing royal government of New York, tolerated its governor, and all naval and military officers, contractors, and Indian agents, and instructed the city and county not to oppose the landing of troops, but to prevent the erection of fortifications for their benefit; and under any circumstances to act simply on the defensive. It also recommended the provision of warlike stores and a safe retreat for the women and children; in accordance with which latter clause, though in direct conflict with preceding directions, John Lamb — afterwards general — obtained a vessel from Connecticut, and with a resolute band of men passed up in the night to Turtle Bay, surprising the guard and capturing a quantity of the king's military stores there deposited, a portion of which were at once forwarded to the army at Cambridge, an exploit of signal service to the country.

May 15.

The Provincial Congress of New York came together after these rules had been laid down for their province, and voted obedience to the Continental Congress so far as the general regulation of the associated colonies were concerned, but declared themselves competent to "freely deliberate and determine all matters relative to the internal police of New York." They made no effort to interfere with the royal officers, while their own edicts were executed to the letter. The *Asia*, a British war vessel, was allowed to obtain provisions from the city; but intercourse between the ship and shore was restrained. When a little later one of the *Asia's* boats was destroyed by some rash and irritated citizens, it was restored at the expense of the city.

May 22.

"Why such scrupulous timidity? Why suffer the king's forces to possess themselves of the most important post in America?" asked Edmund Burke in passionate indignation.

French, had eight children, as follows: 1, David, born 1750, died in infancy; 2, David, born 1751, married Jane Mettick, was an officer in the Revolution, died 1825; 3, Philip, born 1754, died in infancy; 4, Freeman, born 1756, married Henrietta Clarkson, died 1810; 5, MATTHEW, born 1758, served in army through the war, married 1st, Mary Rutherford, 2d, Sarah Cornell, died 1825; 6, Ann Margaret, born 1761, married Garrit Van Horne in 1784, died 1824; 7, Thomas Streatfield, born 1763, married Elizabeth Van Horne in 1790, died 1844; 8, and Levinus, born 1765, married Ann Mary Van Horne, died 1845.

Hosted by Google

"Because there is no effective military organization, no artillery, no ammunition, no means of protection for New York," was the reply of one who saw the madness of hastening hostilities before the semblance of preparation had been effected.

The formation of the American Republic must ever be a theme of wonder, and constitute one of the most novel chapters in the history of mankind. The hazard of attempting self-government, of which internal anarchy is quite as much to be apprehended as the fate of those concerned in case of failure, is clear to every intelligent mind. But it will be observed that wherever the power of Great Britain was disavowed in the colonies it passed naturally into the hands of the people, and in the methods of election, whether of committees or congresses, there was judicious, uniform, and systematic management. The leaders were so cautious that the power should actually and visibly come from the people, that there was no instance of a member of any elective body on the continent taking his seat without exhibiting a well-authenticated certificate that he was duly chosen. In New York City the certificate was signed by the vestrymen of the wards; in some parts of the State, by the chairman of committees, moderators and clerks of town-meetings, or by judges and justices. Thus confidence was established and union cemented. In no colony was there more perfect harmony between the elected and the electors than in New York; and the wisdom of moderation was nowhere else more pronounced and praiseworthy.

The New York Congress was opened and closed with prayer each day of the session, the clergymen of the Episcopal Church officiating as well as those of the Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, and other denominations.[1] The first act was to decide upon rules of procedure; then arose the question of the emission of paper currency, which it was argued would create a common interest among the associated Colonies in the property of the circulating medium, and a common responsibility for its final redemption; and the report forwarded to the Continental Congress contained the main features of the plan finally adopted by the nation. Other subjects crowded rapidly upon notice. There were threatened troubles with the Indians, and it was understood that Colonel Guy Johnson was acting in accordance with orders from England, and actually engaged in the work

[1] On May 26, Rev. Dr. Auchmuty of Trinity officiated; May 27, Rev. Dr. Rodgers of the Brick Church; May 30, Rev. Mr. Gano of the Baptist Church; May 31, Rev. Charles Inglis, Assistant Rector of Trinity; June 1, Rev. Dr. Laidlie of the Middle Dutch Church; June 2, Rev. Dr. John Mason of the Cedar Street (Scotch Presbyterian) Church; June 6, Rev. Dr. John Henry Livingston of the North Dutch Church; and so on, alternating as convenience dictated through the entire summer of 1775.

Hosted by Google

of trying to influence the Six Nations to take up the hatchet against the "king's rebellious subjects in America." Affairs at Ticonderoga demanded attention, but as no troops had yet been raised in New York, Connecticut was requested to send forces to hold the post, and responded promptly. The Continental Congress was inclined to abandon the conquest, being yet so unprepared for war, and rejected a proposition from Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold to invade Canada. But New York was alive to the importance of holding the fortress, and took the matter in charge. Such means of defense as time and circumstances would allow were devised; a bounty of five pounds was offered for every hundred pounds of powder manufactured in the colony, and twenty pounds for every hundred muskets, over and above the regular market price. Resolutions were passed for fortifying the Highlands and the positions about Kingsbridge; new regulations for the militia were instituted, and General Wooster, who was in command of the Connecticut forces at Greenwich, was requested to take up his quarters at Harlem, as a security against a possible invasion. This he did, remaining there several weeks. Philip Schuyler and Richard Montgomery were unanimously nominated, the first as a Major-General and the second as a Brigadier in the army of the continent, and shortly confirmed by the Continental Congress. At the same time every attempt upon the part of the impatient to provoke hostilities was sternly discountenanced.

May 25. On the morning of May 25, the great British generals, Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne, reached Boston with reinforcements, and were obliged to land upon a narrow peninsula with no available outlet save by the sea. The nearer and more imminent the danger, the more the New England heroes displayed their courage; they stripped every island between Chelsea and Point Alderton of sheep, cows, and horses, and burned the lighthouse at the entrance to Boston Harbor. They were confident that if gunpowder could be obtained they could effectually drive the British from any foothold on their coasts.

An order came for the few British troops in the barracks at Chamber Street in New York to join the army in Boston. They accordingly marched

June 6. towards the point of embarkation on the morning of the 6th of June. A whisper ran through the city that the committee had not given them permission to take their arms with them. Marinus Willett accidentally came in front of the party on the corner of Beaver Street in Broad, and without any preconcerted plan caught the horse of the foremost cart of arms by the bridle, which brought the whole procession to a standstill; while he was having sharp words with the commander a crowd collected. Gouverneur Morris reached the scene and declared with

Hosted by Google

warmth that the troops should be allowed to depart unmolested; but John Morin Scott came upon a run, exclaiming, "You are right, Willett, the committee have not given them permission to carry off any spare arms." The front cart was immediately turned and the cartman directed to drive up Beaver Street, all the other carts being compelled to follow. They were conducted amid the deafening cheers of the people to Broadway, corner of John Street, and their contents deposited in the yard of Abraham Van Dyck, a prominent Whig; these were afterwards distributed among the troops raised in New York.[1]

June was a memorable month for America. While Congress at Philadelphia was groping irresolutely in the dark, the very air was exhilarant with aggressive progress all the way from the hills of New Hampshire to the remote forest wilds of Kentucky; far beyond the Alleghanies a few men had organized themselves into a convention on the 25th of May, and founded that commonwealth. Virginia had been peopled by the average cavaliers of the day, under the direction of higher grades of intellect, and now a large array of men of education, property, and condition were revolving the new notions and ideas which were to make us a free and independent people. Maryland, from the beginning, rose upon the shoulders of persons of high birth moved to their destination by the best thought at home, but taking in the vagaries of a larger freedom under a new sky. The county of Mechlenburg, North Carolina, had already been the scene of political meetings which were in tune with the urgency of the times; the inhabitants were chiefly Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, of the race who early emigrated from Scotland to the North of Ireland.[2] The little town of Charlotte was the centre of the culture of the western and most populous portion of North Carolina, and the Royal governor

[1] *Lieutenant-Governor Colden to Earl of Dartmouth*, June 7, 1775 : *Colden Mss.* Colonel Marinus Willett's Narrative, *New York in the Revolution*, 53 – 65. Colonel Willett was born in Jamaica, L. I., July 31, 1740. He had been an officer under General Abercrombie, in Colonel De Lancey's regiment, in 1758 ; and accompanied Bradstreet in his expedition against Fort Frontenac. He was one of the earliest Sons of Liberty in New York ; afterwards joined the army, and subsequently became a brigadier-general. He was mayor of the city of New York in 1807. He died on the 22d of August, 1830, aged 90.

[2] The Scotch-Irish brought to this country the creed and the courage of the Covenanters, as well as their thrift, integrity, and morality ; with ideas eminently republican, they exerted no little influence in molding the American mind. Some settled in New England and New York, but the greater portion passed into the upper regions of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas. From this stock have sprung some of the most prominent families in the South and West. Of eminent men might be mentioned five of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, Read, Thornton, Smith, Taylor, and Rutledge ; also General George Clinton, General Richard Montgomery, and Lord Stirling ; three Presidents of the Union, Jackson, Polk, and Buchanan ; and John Caldwell, John C. Calhoun, Horace Greeley, General McClellan, Charles Johnson McCurdy, and many other well-known public characters.

Hosted by Google

was dazed when he read the resolutions of those whom he had hitherto supposed he might command in an emergency; he said, "They most traitorously declare the entire dissolution of the laws and Constitution, and set up a system of rule and regulation subversive of his Majesty's government." The settlement of the Colonies had been but the removal of ripening European minds in European bodies to another country. As good came here as were left behind, and the heads of these Colonies had ever since been in intercourse with the best talent and wisdom of Europe. Fast-sailing packets brought to our shores Parliamentary discussions, which were scattered broadcast by the press, and repeated from mouth to mouth. The lofty sentiment which was taking shape was constantly fed and fostered by words of sympathy and encouragement from the home continent. It was a period of greater significance than mere development; it was that of interpretation. Nowhere was the conduct of Gage more severely criticised than in England. Lord Effingham retired from military service as soon as he learned his regiment was destined for America. Many other gallant officers did likewise. The king's own brother, the amiable Duke of Gloucester, through genuine admiration for the men of Lexington and Concord, expressed himself so forcibly in his descriptions of the uprising of New England, at a banquet of Louis XVI. given in his honor while in France, that he won a champion for American Independence in the youthful Lafayette, who was present.

All eyes were turned expectantly upon the movements at Boston. On the 12th, General Gage established martial law in Massachu-
June 12. setts, and sent vessels to Sandy Hook to turn the transports to Boston, which were bound to New York with four regiments of soldiers. About the same time Thomas Wickham, the member of the New York Congress from Easthampton, and one of the trustees in charge of Gardiner's Island for the children of the late David Gardiner (the 6th Lord) reported that the British had taken off all the stock from this defenseless point, and desired to know whether pay should be taken for the same.[1]

[1] *Journal of the Provincial Congress; New York Historical Society.* The manor of Gardiner's Island was the first English settlement within the present limits of the State of New York; its founder, Lion Gardiner, having purchased it of Wyandanch, the great sachem of Long Island in 1639, and taken up his residence there during the same year. He was an educated Englishman, whose family has been traced to the Gardiner who was connected by marriage with the Ancient Barony of Fitz Walter; and from an engineer in the English army had been made "Master of Works of Fortifications" in the camp of Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange. He came to America in the employ of a company of English noblemen, to build a city at the mouth of the Connecticut River (a project afterwards abandoned), and commanded the Saybrook Fort through the perils of the great Pequot War with signal ability. He also built the first fort in Boston. He married Mary Willemsen, a Holland lady. His

Hosted by Google

The Continental Congress having at last created a continental army, elected Washington its commander-in-chief. On the following day he accepted the position, refusing all compensation beyond his expenses; and with the full knowledge that he was appointed by the feeblest of all possible governments, prepared for his departure for the seat of war. Four major-generals and eight brigadiers where likewise appointed. At the same moment events were transpiring in Boston which were to electrify all Christendom. Spies, swimming under the very bows of the British war-vessels unseen, communicated to the army of besiegers that the enemy were about to extend their lines over Charlestown. The question was quickly debated of fortifying the Heights of Charlestown (Bunker Hill). But if such step were taken the post must be held against a constant cannonade, and probably a direct assault, and where was the powder to be obtained? General Ward knew that he was hardly commander-in-chief, although in chief command, for in reality there was no New England army; Massachusetts had an army, New Hampshire had an army, Connecticut had an army, and Rhode Island had an army, but there was no association formed and no common authority. They had met under one common impulse and purpose, that was all. The moment, however, was a critical one, and demanded decisive action. Joseph Warren, President of the Massachusetts Congress, and chairman of the Committee of Safety, was in favor of taking the risks for the possible issue. The vote accorded with his judgment, and Ward executed the instructions of his superiors. The next day (the 16th) William Prescott was chosen to lead a detachment to intrench Bunker Hill, and a thousand men were placed under his command. It was one of the most daring enterprises of

June 15.

eldest son, David, was the first white child born in Connecticut. His daughter, Elizabeth, was the first child of English parentage born in New York.

The manor was in a highly prosperous condition at the time of the death of David, the 6th Lord, in the autumn of 1774; and as his two children, John Lyon and David, were quite young, the estate was in charge of three trustees, Colonel Abraham Gardiner, of Easthampton, Thomas Wickham, and David Mulford whose wife was Colonel Gardiner's daughter. It was one of the most exposed portions of the Province; as was also the thriving territory of Easthampton, of which the inhabitants had been among the earliest to come forward in a body and sign an association "never to become slaves." They petitioned for troops to be added to the number they were raising among themselves to enable them to withhold support from the enemy, who, it was predicted, would swoop down upon them for provisions; and, after some deliberation, General Wooster was sent from Harlem with a detachment for the protection of this eastern region. But before operations were perfected, — on August 8, — a fleet of thirteen sail anchored in Gardiner's Bay, and not being able to effect the purchase of stock and other supplies from Colonel Gardiner, plundered the island of nearly twelve hundred sheep, upwards of sixty head of cattle, and hogs, fowls, cheese, and hay, to the value of some four thousand dollars. Henceforward Gardiner's Island was a foraging field for the British.

Hosted by Google

modern warfare. The work must be done in the night, and in such near proximity to the enemy that ordinary conversation might be heard. The men with their wagons and tools were in readiness as the shades of evening settled upon Cambridge. They were drawn up in front of the parsonage, General Ward's headquarters, not knowing whither they were bound, and prayer was offered by the Reverend President of Harvard College, Dr. Langdon. Prescott, with two sergeants carrying dark lanterns open in the rear, gave the order of march at nine o'clock, himself leading the way. With hushed voices and silent tread they passed the narrow isthmus. Then they halted, and Prescott conferred with Colonel Richard Gridley, a competent engineer, and other officers, in relation to the exact spot suitable for their earthworks. The order designated "Bunker Hill," the highest of the two eminences which constituted what was then known as Charlestown Heights. But with scanty military appliances it was quite apparent that both hills could not be fortified in one night, and that the lower, or "Breed's Hill" (as it was afterwards called), was a superior position. Bunker Hill would have been altogether untenable except in connection with Breed's Hill. The British would certainly have occupied the latter summit if the Americans had not, and thus have become masters of the situation.

The Boston bells announced the midnight hour before the sod was broken, and the remnant of a waning moon disappeared. The stars shone with mocking brilliancy. Morning was just beyond the horizon, approaching swiftly. How precious each second of time! Every man was conscious of the risks, and every muscle was strained to the utmost in the rapid work of raising the protecting shield of loose earth. A guard was stationed at the water's edge to note any movement of the British. Five or more armed vessels were moored so close that it seemed almost impossible but that the sentries, if awake, would hear something of the operations. Twice Prescott ran down to the shore to satisfy himself that they had discovered nothing, and was reassured by the drowsy cry from the decks, "All is well." During the night General Putnam appeared for a few moments among the Connecticut men on the Hill, but his hands were full elsewhere. Officers sprang from point to point, putting their own shoulders to the wheel, and men worked as men can only work in the presence of a fearful necessity. Thus minutes yielded the fruits of ordinary hours.

The sun rose upon a scene which foretold serious events. A redoubt had sprung into existence while Boston was sleeping, the earthwork of which was already between six and seven feet high. Cannon from the vessels greeted it with a hot fire without any seeming effect. The British

Hosted by Google

generals repaired to Copp's Hill, twelve hundred yards from it, to study its strength and character. Hurrying its completion, Prescott's one thousand looked like a hive of bees. Untiring, with perspiration streaming from every pore, without food or water,[1] the intense heat of the coming day bearing down upon them with fatal force, they labored with an intrepidity which delayed the measures of the enemy through sheer amazement. Prescott was full of bounding energy, and his words fell like fire-balls of inspiration about him. He was in his fiftieth year, tall, of fine, commanding presence, with frank, open, handsome face, blue eyes and brown hair; he was bald on the top of his head, and later in life wore a wig. He was in a simple and appropriate military costume, — wearing a three-cornered hat, a blue coat with a single row of buttons, lapped and faced, and a well-proven sword.[2] Expecting warm service, he had with him a linen coat or banyan which he wore in the engagement. As he mounted the works with his hat in his hand, and walked leisurely backwards and forwards giving directions, his magnificent figure attracted the attention of Gage on Copp's Hill, who asked of Counselor Willard, at his side, "Who is that officer commanding?"

Willard, recognizing his own brother-in-law, named Colonel Prescott.

"Will he fight?" asked Gage.

"Yes, indeed, depend upon it, to the last drop of blood in him; though I cannot answer for his men."

But Prescott could answer for his men, as the sequel proved.

The story of this battle has been told again and again. Who does not know with what admirable coolness and self-possession, such as would have done credit to the greatest hero of antiquity, Colonel Prescott deliberately gave orders and compelled their obedience. He despatched repeated messengers for reinforcements and provisions, but none came. Without sleep, without breakfast, without dinner, without even a cup of cold water, he and his men prepared for a desperate encounter with a vastly superior force. General Ward, at Cambridge, apprehending that the main attack of the British would be at headquarters, dared not impair his strength by sending more men to Bunker Hill. Even when he was told by Brooks — afterwards governor of Massachusetts, one of Prescott's messengers, who, denied a horse because the roads were raked by the cannon of the gunboats, had made the long detour to headquarters on foot — that

[1] Two barrels of water were knocked in pieces by a shot from one of the vessels. Jacob Nash, the grandfather of the author, witnessed the scene, to whom he often described it while the latter was a child.

[2] This account differs somewhat from the notions obtained from the ideal pictures, where Prescott is represented in the working garb of a farmer, wearing a slouched hat and carrying a musket; but the above description is well authenticated.

Hosted by Google

the British were landing at Charlestown, he refused to change his plan. He simply ordered the New Hampshire regiments of Stark and Reed, then at Medford, to march to Prescott's support. Some two hundred yards in the rear of the redoubt, a low stone-wall crowned by a rail-fence extended towards the Mystic. A few apple-trees were upon either side of it. The meadow, just mown the day before, was rich with half-cured hay in piles. Prescott sent the brave Knowlton with a detachment of Connecticut troops to improvise a fortification by throwing up another rail-fence along the route of this, filling the few feet of space between the two with the fresh-mown hay. The work was done, and proved of great service. But it was only about seven hundred feet long, and there was an opening of nearly the same length between it and the redoubt which there was no time to secure, and no means of defending save behind a few scattered trees.

Thousands of persons from hill-top, steeple, and roof, almost disbelieving their own eyes, regarded every movement with intensest anxiety. Ere the clock struck nine the bustle in Boston indicated that the British would presently attempt to dislodge the bold patriots. But they moved with moderation; they took refreshments by the way; they halted on the grass and sent back for reinforcements; and finally, about half past two o'clock in the afternoon, marched up the hill in their glittering uniforms.

Prescott was undismayed by the thinned ranks of his fighting corps, some of those detailed expressly for the night work having departed. Warren arrived just before the action, saying he came as a volunteer, and asked for a place where the onset would be most furious. It was absolutely necessary, with the small amount of powder in hand, that every charge should take effect, hence the men were ordered to withhold their fire until they could see the whites of the assaulters' eyes. Prescott vowed instant death to any one who disobeyed him in this respect, and when the word was given and the deadly flashes burst forth, the enemy fell like the tall grass before the practiced sweep of the mower. General Pigott, who commanded the British left wing, was obliged to give the order for retreat. General Howe, meanwhile, with the British right wing, made for the rail-fence where Putnam had posted the artillery, and threatened to cut down any of his men who risked the waste of a musket discharge without orders. The word was given when the enemy were within eight rods, and a lane was mown through the advancing column. The assailants retreated in confusion. Our troops and our cause suffered from want of discipline and imperfect preparation; and an almost insuperable barrier to the bringing on of reinforcements was the plowing of the neck of land by the incessant volleys from the ships, which kept a cloud of dust darkening

Hosted by Google

the air. At this crisis fresh troops came over from Boston, and the enemy rallied for a second attack. Again were the British fairly and completely driven from the hill. It was during this assault that Charlestown was set on fire by order of Howe, and its church and over two hundred dwellings were falling in one great blaze. The few remaining rounds of powder were distributed by Prescott himself to the less than two hundred men left in the redoubt, and there were not fifty bayonets in his party. The British made the third desperate assault, and hand to hand and face to face were exchanged the last savage hostilities of that day. It was only when the redoubt was crowded by the enemy and its defenders in a dense promiscuous throng, and fresh assailants were on every side pouring into it, that Prescott conducted an orderly but still resisting retreat. The chivalrous Warren was among the last to leave the redoubt, and fell a few rods from it. Putnam, with Knowlton and Stark, made a vigorous stand at the rail-fence, which was of the utmost service to the retreating party, but were also compelled to retire. The enemy were in no condition to pursue, and remained apparently content with the little patch of ground which had cost them so many lives. They had brought their last forces into the field; more than a third of those engaged lay dead or bleeding, and the survivors were exhausted by the courage of their adversaries. All that night and the next day boats, drays, and stretchers were conveying the wounded and dying to Boston. Seventy commissioned officers were wounded and thirteen slain. Even the battle of Quebec, which won half a continent, did not cost the lives of as many officers. Gage estimated his loss at one thousand fifty-four. Of the Americans, one hundred and forty-five were killed. This battle put an end to all offensive operations on the part of Gage.

The news reached Philadelphia on the 22d, and the next day Washington, accompanied by two of the newly appointed major-generals, Lee and Schuyler, and a volunteer corps of light horse, started for the seat of war. As the brilliant cavalcade clattered through the country, it was the delight and wonder of every town and village. The New York Congress were in a dilemma when a message came that Washington would arrive in the city on the 25th, and another to say that Governor Tryon, just from Europe, was on a vessel in the harbor, and would probably land about the same time. Tryon was still held to be the legal governor by order of the Continental Congress, although the only allegiance shown him by the New York Congress was outward respect, and a vigilant caution that his person should not be molested. It was not desirable that the two distinguished officials should meet, and it was incumbent on the self-constituted authorities to

June 23.

June 25.

Hosted by Google

pay military honors to both. In the embarrassment of the moment they ordered one company of militia to meet Washington, and another to be ready at the ferry to welcome whichever dignitary should first arrive "as well as circumstances would allow." A committee consisting of John Sloss Hobart, Melancton Smith, Richard Montgomery, and Gouverneur Morris met Washington in Newark, and attended him to New York. It was a lovely afternoon, bells were rung joyfully, militia paraded in their gayest trim, and the handsome, courtly commander-in-chief, in a uniform of blue, with purple sash, and long plume of feathers in his hat, was drawn in an open phaeton by a pair of white horses, up Broadway, which was lined by multitudes to the very house-tops. A letter from Gilbert Livingston to Dr. Peter Tappan gives an account of the affair in all its freshness.

NEW YORK, June 29, 1775.

"DEAR BROTHER, — You will see by the warrants who are nominated officers for your County, it is very likely we shall raise an additional number of troops besides the 3,000 now Raised. We expect all dilligence will be used in Recruiting, that the Regiments may be formed immediately. Last Saturday about two o'clock the Generals Washington Lee and Schuyler arrived here, they crossed the North River at Hoback[1] and landed at Coll Lispenards.[2] There were 8 or 10 Companies under Arms all in Uniforms who marched out to Lispenards, the procession began from there thus, the Companies first, Congress next, two of Continental Congress next, General Officers next, & a Company of horse from Philadelphia who came with the General brought up the rear, there were an innumerable Company of people Men Women and Children present. In the evening Governor Tryon landed as in the newspapers. I walked with my friend George Clinton, all the way to Lispenards — who is now gone home.[3] I am very well hope all Friends so, the Torys Catey[4] writes are as violent as ever! poor insignificant souls, Who think themselves of great importance. The Times will soon show. I fancy that they must quit their Wicked Tenets at least in pretense and show fair, Let their Hearts be Black as Hell. Go on be spirited & I doubt not success will Crown our Honest endeavours for the Support of our Just Rights and Privaledges."

Governor Tryon landed about eight o'clock the same evening, and was met and escorted by a delegation of magistrates, and the militia in full dress, to the residence of the Hon. Hugh Wallace. He wrote to Dartmouth shortly after, that he was only in the exercise of such feeble executive powers as suited the convenience or caprice of the country, and he felt most keenly his ignoble situation. He said every traveler on the

[1] Hoboken.

[2] In the vicinity of Laight Street, near Greenwich.

[3] The wife of George Clinton was Cornelia, sister of Dr. Tappan.

[4] "Catey" was the wife of Gilbert Livingston and sister of Dr. Tappan.

Hosted by Google

continent must have a pass from some committee or some congress, in order to proceed from one point to another.

Washington met the New York Congress on the day following his reception, exchanged addresses and civilities, and discussed military questions of moment, chiefly concerning the formidable power which threatened from the interior of this province; then hastened towards Cambridge, where he was much needed. Schuyler was left in command of the militia of New York. The Continental Congress had already ordered New York to contribute three thousand men as her quota to the army of the country. Four regiments were soon raised and placed under Colonels McDougal, Van Schaick, James Clinton, and Holmes. John Lamb was appointed captain of a company of artillery. He was shortly instructed by the New York Congress to remove the guns on the battery to the fortifications in the Highlands. While accomplishing this feat, on the night of August 23, he was fired upon by a party from the *Asia*, who were in a barge close under the fort, evidently to watch proceedings, and returned a volley which sent the hostile craft swiftly to the shelter of the ship, with one man killed and several wounded. A broadside was at once opened upon the city by the *Asia*, wounding three of Lamb's men and injuring some of the houses in the vicinity of Whitehall. In the mean time the cannon, in all twenty-one pieces, were taken hence with great deliberation. The panic was such that many families hurriedly removed from the city the next day. The captain of the *Asia* wrote to the Mayor, Whitehead Hicks, in the early morning, demanding satisfaction for the murder of one of his men in the skirmish. The public functionaries were summoned to the council-room of the City Hall, including the Mayor and Common Council, Governor Tryon, and of his counselors Daniel Horsemanden, Oliver De Lancey, Charles Ward Apthorpe, Henry White, and Hugh Wallace, together with the members of the New York Congress who were in town, to consult in regard to the alarming condition of affairs. It was agreed, after considerable discussion, that as the *Asia* had seen fit to cannonade the city, she must henceforward receive no more supplies from it directly, but fresh provisions might be delivered on Governor's Island for her benefit. Thus there would be no communication between the vessel and the town. Orders to this effect were issued on the 29th. A week later Tryon wrote to Dartmouth: —

June 26.

Aug. 23.

Aug. 24.

Aug. 29.

"The city has remained quiet since, but a boat which carried only some milk to the ship was burnt on her return to shore, as was last Sunday a country sloop for having put some provisions on board the man-of-war. Such is the rage of the present animosity. At least one third of the citizens have moved with their

Hosted by Google

effects out of town, and many of the inhabitants will shortly experience the distresses of necessity and want."

It may be observed that the ablest and best-informed of those who have censured the New York Congress for permitting any supplies whatever to reach the *Asia* are scarcely consistent with themselves. On what principle of generalship could an engagement have been provoked with an adversary of such strength without as yet the slightest means of defense? It is hardly conceivable that men of genius and judgment, as the majority of this Congress unquestionably were, should commit so great a blunder as to throw the firebrands which would have certainly laid the city in ashes, to the great risk of life and destruction of property. There were other and broader objects and aims than the punishment of one war vessel which manifestly had the advantage at the present moment. Despite the clamor of the short-sighted and impatient, less diplomacy and discretion at this crisis would have done irreparable injury to the American cause. "We had better be dubbed cowards and tories than to beat our heads against a wall," said Gouverneur Morris.

Tryon wrote to Dartmouth in an hour of deep dejection: —

"Every day produces fresh proof of a determined spirit of resistance in the Confederate Colonies. The Americans from politicians are becoming soldiers, and however problematical it once was, there can be no doubt now of their intention to persevere to great extremity, unless they are called back by some liberal and conciliatory assurances." [1]

Tryon was privately informed by General Montgomery that measures were being matured by Congress for his arrest and imprisonment, and after suffering much uneasiness and mortification, he retired, on the 30th of October, to the ship *Duchess of Gordon,* under protection of the guns of the *Asia* in the harbor.

Oct. 30.

John Morin Scott wrote to Richard Varick on the 15th of November following: —

"Every office shut up almost, but Sam Jones's who will work for 6/ a day & live accordingly — All Business stagnated, the City half deserted for fear of a Bombardment — a new Congress elected — Those for New York you will see by the papers are changed for the better — All staunch Whigs now. How it is with the Convention I know not. We have [not rec'd] Returns. Yesterday the new Congress was to meet but I believe they did not make a house. My Doctors say I must not attend it nor any other Business in some Weeks; but I hope they will be mistaken. Nothing from t'other side of the Water but a fearful looking for of wrath. Our continental petition most probably condemned the Bulk of

[1] *Tryon to Dartmouth*, September 5, 1775. *N. Y. Coll. Ms.* VIII. 633.

Hosted by Google

the Nation (it is said ag[t] US) and a bloody campaign next summer. But let us be prepared for the worst. Who can prize life without Liberty? It is a Bauble only fit to be thrown away."[1]

The limit of the first New York Congress having expired, an election took place at the usual time in the autumn; the second Congress, chosen for six months, was to have met November 14, but a quorum was not present until December 6.[2] There has ever been in the public mind a very natural confusion concerning the committees and congresses of New York in this exciting period. But the careful reader of preceding pages will note the sequence unbroken from the birth of the famous Fifty-One in the spring of 1774; and the gradual unfolding of the subtle forces inherent in the community which were soon to assume majestic place and meaning. Whenever the Provincial Congress adjourned, for however short a time, a Committee of Safety was delegated from their own numbers to manage affairs in the interim; therefore a responsible body representing the people was at all times in session. No colony had acquired more dexterity in the performance of public business than New York; and one of the strongly marked features in the complicated machinery of the new government, which was already beginning its movements, was the special care taken by all men in office not to wield more power than had been distinctly delegated to them by the united voice of their constituents.

Isaac Sears, so conspicuous for his zeal in the earlier New York committees, without any particular fitness for leadership in any direction, and wholly deficient in judgment, had removed to New Haven, where he raised a company of cavalry. Becoming incensed with James Rivington,[3] the editor of the *New York Gazetteer* (published since Nov. 23.

[1] *New York in the Revolution*, 84, 85. John Morin Scott was born in New York in 1730, and graduated at Yale College in 1746; he afterwards studied law and became one of the leading members of the New York bar, where many of the ablest minds of America were then practicing. He was appointed a Brigadier-General in June, 1776, and was engaged in the battle of Long Island. In March, 1777, he left the military service to become Secretary of the State of New York. In 1782 and 1783 he served in the Continental Congress. He died in 1784 in New York.

[2] *Journal of the Provincial Congress of New York*, 197.

[3] James Rivington, printer and bookseller in New York during the Revolution, was a man of fifty (born in London, 1724), possessing talent, fine manners, and much general information. In May, 1775, he was placed in confinement by order of Congress for his attacks upon the patriots, to which body he applied for release, declaring "that, however wrong and mistaken he may have been in his opinions, he always meant openly and honestly to do his duty as a servant of the public." In 1777 he resumed the publication of his paper; but in 1781, when British success looked doubtful, he turned spy, and furnished Washington important information; thus, when New York was evacuated he remained in the city, where he died in 1802.

Hosted by Google

1773), for his severe strictures upon the conduct of the Americans, he, unannounced, swooped down upon New York City with seventy-five mounted men armed to the teeth, and destroyed Rivington's printing-press and other apparatus, carrying off the types, which were converted into bullets. It was a riotous proceeding, universally condemned by the citizens of the city, and met the rank disapproval of the Committee of Safety, who declared it unworthy of an enlightened people to attempt "to restrain the freedom of the Press."

With the approach of winter, New York grew more and more cheerless. Scarcely a third of its residents had returned to their homes. An ominous apprehension of calamity hung over the city. Governor Tryon was visited by his counselors from time to time on the *Duchess of Gordon*, but they were impotent to exercise the powers conferred upon them by the king of England even in the smallest particulars. Help was daily expected, and they smiled among themselves as they contemplated the easy conquest of the metropolis with the arrival of Britain's army. Why it should be so long in coming was a problem.

One glance across the water, and we shall see that Barrington's estimate of England's military strength was correct. When the tidings of the battle of Bunker Hill were discussed at Whitehall the lords were startled by the loss of so many officers; the king remarked, with arrogant composure, that he would have twenty thousand soldiers in America before spring. Barrington suggested to the Secretary of State that no such number could be raised. George III. at once made efforts to secure troops from the continent of Europe, sending agents to Hanover, Holland, Germany, and Russia. The astute Vergennes could hardly convince himself that England's statesman would miss the means, so apparent to him, of pacifying America, although he unhesitatingly pronounced George III. the most obstinate king alive, and as weak as Charles I. But he was forced to give up his doubts when he read the king's proclamation against the Colonies, which reached America in November. The Empress of Russia returned a sarcastic negative answer when invited to ship twenty thousand men across the Atlantic to serve under British command; and the king was obliged to turn for aid to the smaller princes of Germany.

While England was quivering from center to circumference with the heat of the discussions over the injudicious and apparently impracticable schemes of her monarch, which half the kingdom believed fraught with disgrace, Washington, acting under a promiscuous executive, was making a herculean endeavor to organize a regular army and a military system from the disconnected material around Boston. Erelong it was

Hosted by Google

discovered that Carleton, the British governor of Canada, was enlisting the French peasantry in an expedition to recover Ticonderoga, and also instigating the northern savages to take up the hatchet against New York and New England. These movements decided the Continental Congress to occupy that Province as an act of self-defense. The command of the perilous enterprise was assigned to the two New York generals, Schuyler and Montgomery.

Philip Schuyler was forty-two years of age when he thus appeared conspicuously before the world. He was born to opulence, inherited the masterly traits of an ancestry which for three generations had been foremost in promoting the welfare and development of New York, was a natural as well as a trained mathematician, was familiar with military engineering, having served in an important department of the army during the French War, was well versed in finance and political economy, and was a thorough scholar in the French language; he was personally proud, self-poised, high-spirited, impatient of undeserved criticism, but superior to envy of any description, and one of the most unpretentious and generous of men. His mother was the beautiful Cornelia Van Cortlandt, a lady of great force of character, the youngest daughter of Hon. Stephanus Van Cortlandt and Gertrude Schuyler, so interesting from their political consequence and social consideration in an earlier decade of our history. He had been one of the most earnest advocates of liberty in the New York Assembly; his well-balanced mind had acted a faithful part in the Continental Congress, and in the later councils of the Province; and from the first he liberally pledged his own personal credit for the public wants. He repaired at once to his charming home on the banks of the Upper Hudson,[1] a great, elegant, old-fashioned family mansion, half hidden among ancestral trees, and surrounded by gardens, fruit-orchards, and broad, highly cultivated acres, and after a brief visit turned his face warward. At Ticonderoga his duty was the same as that of Washington at Cambridge, — the raising, organizing, equipping, provisioning, and paying of men from an uncertain and scarcely founded treasury; and the obstacles and the dangers were much greater, from his proximity to the hostile element hovering about Johnson Hall, and the totally unprotected condition of the region of the Hudson; and the New England soldiers at the post, as well as those that came afterwards, were volunteers mostly from the farms, undisciplined, and holding themselves on an equality with the subordinate officers, and quite as much inclined to dictate as to obey.

Richard Montgomery, from the old Scotch-Irish nobility, born at Con-

[1] A noble estate at Saratoga, inherited from an uncle.

Hosted by Google

way House, near Raphoe, Ireland, was a laureled warrior, although but thirty-eight years of age. He entered the English army while quite young, and distinguished himself with Wolfe in the brilliant conquests of the French War. He was an intimate friend of Barré, and well known personally to Edmund Burke, Fox, and other English statesmen, and he had stood shoulder to shoulder with the colonists in five important military campaigns. He had retired from the service and some time since taken up his abode in New York, purchasing a large property on the Hudson. He married Janet Livingston, daughter of Judge Robert R. Livingston—who was accustomed to say that if American liberty failed to be maintained, he would remove with his family to Switzerland, as the only free country in the world — and sister of the future chancellor, then one of the important members of the Continental Congress. It was this lady's great-grandfather, Robert Livingston, who figured so prominently for half a century in the public affairs of New York, and her grandfather, Robert Livingston, who prophecied for years the coming conflict with England, and on his deathbed, in 1775, at the age of eighty-seven, watching with keen interest the results of the battle of Bunker Hill, confidently predicted America's independence ; and in her veins also coursed the republican blood of the Schuylers and Beekmans. From a domestic circle which had for its inheritance an infusion of lofty sentiment in harmony with the appeals for justice from a Parliamentary minority of the choicest and greatest of the realm of England, Montgomery had been summoned to represent Duchess County in the New York Congress. His great moral and intellectual qualities instantly found recognition. His sound judgment was valued as it deserved,



Portrait of Richard Montgomery.

Hosted by Google

and his promptness in action and decision of character inspired heroic confidence.

He was regarded with pride and affection as, bidding adieu to his lovely home and recently wedded joys, he turned his face toward the uninviting northern frontiers. His figure even now stands out through the mists of a century in living colors, — tall, of fine military presence, of graceful address, with a bright magnetic face, winning manners, and the bearing of a prince. His wife accompanied him to Saratoga, where they parted — forever.

Events soon proved the wisdom of attempting the conquest of Canada as a safeguard against Indian hostilities, and preparations were pushed with vigor. Schuyler, who knew all the country and its inhabitants, civilized and savage, went to Albany to use his influence with some of the warriors of the Six Nations there assembled; but a despatch from Washington hurried him again to Ticonderoga. He found Montgomery, who had also caught the warning note from the commander-in-chief, already *en route* over Lake Champlain. Schuyler was stricken down with a bilious fever, which did not, however, prevent his journeying three days in a covered batteau, overtaking Montgomery and party. But his illness became so serious that he was compelled to relinquish the chief command to Montgomery and return to Ticonderoga.

The details of this expedition are among the most remarkable and romantic of the Revolutionary contest. The way bristled with difficulties, roads and bridges were among the modern conveniences of the future, the munitions of war were insufficient, food was scarce and of the poorest quality, and the common troops were full of the inquisitiveness and self-direction of civil life. Montgomery was much better able to manage the New York than the New England soldiers, as his authority depended chiefly upon his personal influence and powers of persuasion; of the latter he said, "They are the worst stuff imaginable for fighting; there is so much equality among them that the privates are all generals, but not soldiers." And yet with a force of one thousand men Montgomery captured the fort at Chamblée and the post of St. John's,[1] proceeded to Montreal,[2] and leaving General Wooster in command of that town, led his gallant little army to the very walls of Quebec.

[1] Colonel Marinus Willett of New York was left in command of the fort of St. John's.

[2] Montgomery wrote to his wife, November 24: "The other day General Prescott was so obliging as to surrender himself and fourteen or fifteen land officers, with above one hundred men, besides sea officers and sailors, prisoners of war. I blush for His Majesty's troops! Such an instance of base poltroonery I never met with! And all because we had a half a dozen cannon on the bank of the river to annoy him in his retreat. The Governor [Carleton] escaped — more 's the pity! Prescott, nevertheless, is a prize."

Hosted by Google

During his triumphal progress Benedict Arnold, with rare boldness and persistence, conducted a detachment of Washington's army through a trackless wilderness of nearly three hundred miles, where for thirty-two days they saw no trace of the presence of human beings. Their provisions fell short towards the last, so that it is said some of the men ate their dogs, cartouch-boxes, breeches, and shoes. They appeared, after losing about half their number, at Point Lévi, opposite Quebec; an apparition which so startled the Canadians that, had boats been obtainable, it is more than probable that Quebec would have capitulated at the first demand without a struggle. Aaron Burr, a mere stripling, was of this party, and was chosen by Arnold to communicate his presence to Montgomery, one hundred and twenty miles distant, in Montreal. In the garb of a priest, and making use of his Latin and French, Burr obtained a trusty guide and one of the rude wagons of the country, and from one religious family to another was conveyed in safety to his destination. Montgomery was so charmed with his successful daring, that he at once made him his aide-de-camp, with the rank of captain.

It was on the 3d of December that Montgomery made a junction with Arnold,[1] and soon decided to carry Quebec by storm. His reasons were twofold: he was unprovided with the means for a siege, and the term of the enlistment of the greater portion of his troops would expire with the year. Whatever was done must be concentrated within the month of December.

Dec. 3.

It was on the 30th, while but a few more hours of the old year remained, that the order was given. The principal attacks were conducted by Montgomery and Arnold in person. Colonel James Livingston, a New-Yorker who had for some time lived in Canada, was at the head of a regiment of Canadian auxiliaries which he had himself raised, and was sent, with his command, to St. John's Gate to distract attention, while another party under Brown was to feign a movement on Cape Diamond. Arnold, leading twice as many men as Montgomery, reached the Palace Gate, where in the first fierce encounter he was disabled by a wound in the leg and carried from the field. Captain Lamb, with his New York artillery, fought in this division, Lamb himself being

Dec. 30.

[1] Montgomery's last letter to his wife was written December 5. He says: "I suppose long ere this we have furnished the folks of the United Colonies with subject-matter of conversation. I should like to see the long faces of my Tory friends. I fancy that they look a little cast down, and that the Whig ladies triumph most unmercifully.

"The weather continues so gentle that we have been able, at this late season, to get down [the St. Lawrence] by water with our artillery. They are a good deal alarmed in town [Quebec], and with some reason. I wish it were well over with all my heart, and sigh for home like a New Englander."

Hosted by Google

wounded and taken prisoner. Montgomery reserved for his own party New York men, and in the blackness of the night, and through a blinding storm of wind, snow, and hail, led them, Indian file, to Wolfe's Cove, from which they were seen in full march at early dawn. And ever by the side of the princely commander was the diminutive and boyish Aaron Burr. They passed the first barrier, and were about to storm the second, when within fifty yards of the cannon, Montgomery exclaimed, "Men of New York, you will not fear to follow where your general leads; push on, brave boys, Quebec is ours!" and almost instantly fell. And with his life the soul of the expedition departed.

Foes and friends alike paid a tribute to his worth. Barré wept profusely when he heard of his death. Burke proclaimed him a hero who in one campaign had conquered two thirds of Canada. "Curse on his virtues," said North; "they 've undone his country!" Governor Carleton, with all his officers, civil and military, in Quebec, buried him with the honors of war.[1] Congress passed resolutions of sorrow and grateful remembrance; and all America was in tears.

Quebec, the strongest fortified city in America, with a garrison of twice the number of the besiegers, was not conquered, but the heroic endeavor created an impression throughout the world that America was in earnest.

[1] The remains of Montgomery were removed forty-three years afterward, in compliance with a special act of the Legislature, and placed beneath the portico in St. Paul's Chapel, New York City, where a monument had been erected to his memory by order of Congress. By request of Mrs. Montgomery, the Governor of the State of New York, DeWitt Clinton, commissioned Lewis Livingston, the son of Edward Livingston, to conduct the ceremonies of removal, which were on a most brilliant scale, such voluntary honors indeed as were never before paid to the memory of an individual by a republic.

The only original portrait of Montgomery (of which the sketch is a copy) is at Montgomery Place on the Hudson. It was sent to Mrs. Montgomery by Lady Ranelagh, the sister of the General, shortly after his death, having been painted in Europe when the young hero was about twenty-five. He left no descendants. His will, made at Crown Point, August 30, 1775, is still in existence, though the paper is yellow and worn with its hundred years, and it bears the well-known signature of Benedict Arnold.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXXII.

1776.

January - July.

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

THE NEW YEAR. — NEW YORK ACTIVE, BUT CAUTIOUS. — GOVERNOR FRANKLIN OF NEW JERSEY IN CUSTODY. — BURNING OF PORTLAND, MAINE. — BURNING OF NORFOLK, VIRGINIA. — FAMILIES DIVIDED AND FRIENDS AT ENMITY. — NEW YORK DISARMS THE TORIES ON LONG ISLAND. — THE PAMPHLET "COMMON SENSE." — SIR JOHN JOHNSON SURRENDERS TO SCHUYLER. — LEE'S ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK. — GENERAL CLINTON'S ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK. — THE PANIC. — LORD STIRLING IN COMMAND OF NEW YORK. — GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM. — ESCAPE OF HON. JOHN WATTS. — FORTIFICATIONS. — THE BRITISH ARMY DRIVEN FROM BOSTON. — WASHINGTON TRANSFERS THE AMERICAN ARMY TO NEW YORK. — SILAS DEANE SENT TO THE FRENCH KING FOR HELP. — CANADA'S COMMISSIONERS. — THE THIRD NEW YORK CONGRESS. — ALEXANDER HAMILTON. THE CONSPIRACY. — RIOTS AND DISTURBANCES. — BRITISH FLEET OFF SANDY HOOK. — GOVERNOR WILLIAM LIVINGSTON. — LIBERTY HALL. — THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS. — DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

THE opening of the year 1776, one of the most romantic and remarkable years for its sequence of civil wonders in the history of the world, was depressing in the extreme. The social observances of New Year's day in New York City for the first time in a century and a half were omitted, save in a few isolated cases where the ladies of the household welcomed family friends without ceremony. A storm of wind, sleet, and rain terminated towards evening in a light fall of snow. The streets were deserted, and the portentous clouds seemed to close about the very roofs and chimneys. The mind of the people was strained and apprehensive, the more so because of the undefined nature of the new life upon which they were entering. There was nothing fictitious or deceptive in the freshly awakened impulses and activities, but the step from the past into the untried future was creative of the most extraordinary sensations.

Clinton was confidently expected from Boston. The metropolis was barren of defenses. The Bay of New York was already controlled by the British men-of-war; also the East River, and the Hudson River below

Hosted by Google

the Highlands. And neither Long Island nor Staten Island could prevent the landing of British troops upon their soil. The possession of Long Island was virtually the command of Manhattan Island.

The proceedings of the New York Congress were with closed doors; none but members, all of whom were pledged to secrecy, were permitted to take copies of the minutes. The intention was to publish at the close of each session such of the acts as were not voted by the counties to be of a secret or unimportant nature, but the journal was not printed until 1842. In the gathering together of war materials this body was industrious from the first. They advised Washington from time to time of things taken from the king's stores, as, for instance:

"In a private room in the lower barracks some twenty cart-loads of soldiers' sheets, blankets, shirts, and a box of fine lint; in John Gilbert's store ten hogsheads of empty cartridges, and some twenty-four-pounders; in a private room in upper barracks near Liberty-Pole about six cart-loads of different kinds of medicines; and in Isaac Sears' old store one hundred and thirty boxes of tallow candles, and a lot of soldiers' sheets and blankets."[1]

And they were frequently under orders from the Continental Congress to procure flour and other necessaries "in the most private manner possible" for the various divisions of the army.

In New Jersey a self-organized government acted, as in New York, side by side with that of the king during the greater part of 1775. Governor Franklin, who had for a dozen years been useful and honored as an executive,[2] sympathized with the power which had given and could take away his means of living. In September he suspended Lord Stirling from his Council for having accepted a military appointment under the Continental Congress. He prorogued the Legislature which convened December 6, until January 3, 1776, and it never reassembled; thus terminated the Provincial Legislature of New Jersey. He wrote to Dartmouth: —

"My situation is indeed particular and not a little difficult, having no more than one among the principal officers of government to whom I can, even now, speak confidently on public affairs."

This communication was intercepted January 6, by Lord Stirling, which resulted in a guard being placed at the gate of his residence to prevent his escape from the province; and his subsequent arrest and imprisonment.[3]

[1] *Washington's Correspondence in Congressional Library.* Washington, D. C.

[2] See Vol. I. p. 705.

[3] Governor Franklin was confined in Connecticut in charge of Governor Trumbull. In November, 1778, he was exchanged, and came to New York, where he resided four years, and founded and presided over a Refugee Club. He retired to England at the close of the war.

Hosted by Google

Dr. Franklin felt most keenly the defection of his son. It was a strange coincidence that William Temple Franklin,[1] the only son of Governor Franklin, adhering to the cause of America, should also have been lost to his father.

Family histories disclose many painful characteristics of the great struggle. Fathers and mothers were doomed to see their children at open variance. Wives beheld in agony their husbands armed with weapons that were to be used against their own blood. Friends, between whom no shadow of dissension had ever existed, ranged themselves under different banners. New Jersey, with less of foreign commerce and inland traffic to employ her youth than many of the other Colonies, had courted government offices and the naval and military service of England. Ever since the time of the original Lords Proprietors, many of her sons had been educated in Europe, involving associations which often resulted in marriages into foreign families; while similar unions had occurred between the officers of the royal regiments sent to America and the daughters of New Jersey. Thus, independent of pecuniary considerations and conscientious adherence to the oaths of office and dependence, personal and domestic happiness were jeopardized on every hand. The wonder is, not that so many valuable men became distinguished as Tories, but that their number should have been so far exceeded by the resolute spirits pushed to the front by the concussion of ethereal forces.

The impending invasion of New York City caused its inhabitants to seek asylums in the country in every direction, particularly in New Jersey, which aroused the New Jersey Congress into the passing of an ordinance to repress the influx, "it being unknown upon what principles such removals were occasioned," — whether to escape ministerial oppression or the resentment of an injured community, — and all persons coming from New York with the design of residing in New Jersey were required to produce a permit from the committee of their precinct; in case of refusal, to be themselves returned immediately from whence they came. The whole power of the Province of New Jersey was exercised by this self-constituted body, which assumed control over its funds and directed its physical energies.

The animosity which burst into a blaze between those for and against kingly rule was of the most serious character. Language was ransacked for forms of speech with which to express the abhorrence each felt for the other. The old saying became current, "though we are commanded to forgive our enemies, we are nowhere commanded to forgive our friends."

[1] William Temple Franklin resided in France, became the biographer of his grandfather, and died at Paris, May 25, 1823.

Hosted by Google

Every week brought news which intensified the bitterness. The rumor that general orders had been issued by the British Ministry to burn all the seaport towns of America (though without foundation) was believed by thousands; and, as if in confirmation of the startling story, Norfolk, the best town in Virginia, the oldest and most loyal colony of England, was burned and laid waste by Lord Dunmore, the Royal governor who had been driven from that province. This following in the immediate wake of the wanton bombardment and burning of Portland, Maine, by a British man-of-war, lashed the American heart into a fury of antipathy which it required two entire generations to eradicate. "I can no longer join in the petitions of our worthy pastor for reconciliation," wrote Mrs. Adams, the most gifted woman of the period. Franklin, returning from Cambridge, where he had been sent on an important mission to Washington, appeared before Congress in a stern mood. He had recently written to Dr. Priestley that humorous summing of the grand result of the first campaign which was a standing paragraph in the newspapers for years: "Britain, at the expense of three millions, has killed one hundred and fifty Yankees this campaign, which is twenty thousand pounds a head, and at Bunker Hill she gained a mile of ground, half of which she lost again by taking post on Ploughed Hill. During the same time sixty thousand children have been born in America. From these *data* Dr. Price's mathematical head will easily calculate the time and expense necessary to kill us all, and conquer our whole territory." But it was a long time before Franklin could pen any more jokes upon the war. He was fully prepared now to go to all lengths in opposition to England.

The New York Congress appealed to the Continental Congress for a military force to disarm every man on Long Island who voted adversely to their existence as a body, and a committee consisting of William Livingston, John Jay, and Samuel Adams reported promptly and favorably. Full authority was invested in the New York Congress to direct and control the troops employed in this delicate service, which was assigned to Jerseymen under Colonel (afterwards General) Nathaniel Heard, assisted by Lord Stirling's battalion, and which was accomplished before the end of January.

Meanwhile a little pamphlet of thirty pages, penned by a literary adventurer unknown to fame, who had been but a year in this country, and entitled "Common Sense" by Dr. Rush of Philadelphia, electrified the whole continent. Thomas Paine had the genius to condense into vivid expression the political doctrines of George Fox, William Penn, Turgot, Adam Smith, Franklin, and Jefferson, and the press of Pennsylvania placed it before the people. It was a startling success. Jan. 2.

Hosted by Google

It fell into everybody's hands. Edition after edition was sold. It is not dull reading even now. Of the grave point at issue it said: —

"The sun never shone on a cause of greater worth. 'T is not the affair of a city, a country, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent, of at least one eighth part of the habitable globe. 'T is not the concern of a day, a year, an age; posterity are virtually involved in it even to the end of time."

Its reasoning was that Europe and not England was the parent country of America. This idea struck deep into the heart of New York, where the majority of the inhabitants were not of English descent. Its claim was that this continent could not reap a single advantage by connection with Great Britain; that its business could not be managed with any degree of convenience by a power so distant, and so very ignorant of its geography and resources.

"There is something absurd in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island; in no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than the primary planet."

During the same memorable month of January General Schuyler performed a service for the country, without bloodshed, which was of the first importance in its bearing upon coming events. New York, the central and all-important link in the confederacy, contained an element of savage power which occasioned the utmost solicitude. Arms and ammunition were said to be concealed in Tryon County, and it was well understood that Sir John Johnson had fortified Johnson Hall, and gathered about him his Scotch Highland tenants and Indian allies, intending to carry fire and sword along the valley of the Mohawk. While Schuyler was deploring the condition of the army in Canada, and entreating for three thousand men to reinforce Arnold at Quebec, the Continental Congress, acting from the advice of the New York Congress, ordered him to take measures for disarming these hostile forces in the interior of New York. He forthwith hastened from Albany at the head of a body of soldiers, defying the wintry storms and deep drifts of snow, and joined by Colonel Herkimer with the militia of Tryon County, marched over the frozen bosom of the Mohawk River and suddenly appeared before Sir John's stronghold on the 19th of January. Resistance was hopeless, and Sir John capitulated, surrendering all weapons of war and military stores in his possession, and giving his parole not to take up arms against America. On these conditions he was granted a permit to go as far westward in Tryon County as the German Flats and Kingsland districts, and to every part of the colony southward and eastward of these districts; provided he did not go into any seaport town. On the following day, all

Jan. 19.

Jan. 20.

Hosted by Google

things being adjusted, Schuyler with his troops in line, and his officers and men instructed to preserve respectful silence, conducted the surrender with gentlemanly regard to the feelings of Sir John and his Scottish adherents; Sir John himself was allowed to retain a few favorite family side-arms, making a list of them. The whole party marched to the front, grounded their arms, and were dismissed with timely advice as to their conduct towards America. For his discreet management of the whole affair, Schuyler was warmly applauded by Congress, and congratulated by Washington.

It is impossible to regard the wise and effective movements of New York at this critical juncture but with admiration. The adverse influences within her own territory were being overcome gradually, but with a high hand. Governor Tryon, castled on a British ship in the harbor, was keeping up a suspicious intercourse with the citizens, and the commercial classes had little faith in the success of what was termed the "rebellion." Everybody suspected everybody; even the strongest assurances of attachment to either side in the controversy were often doubted. The scholarly training of the men who were conspicuous in the New York Congress is apparent through their intolerance of injustice in any form. They were hopeful amid the network of difficulties which surrounded them, and displayed a breadth of vision which the rash and narrow-minded had not the ability to perceive. They empowered county committees in every part of the province to apprehend all persons notoriously disaffected, and by judicious examinations ascertain if they were guilty of any hostile act or machination. Imprisonment or banishment was the penalty. Committees thus appointed could call upon the militia at any moment to aid them in the discharge of their functions.

Isaac Sears, for his meddling propensities and unjustifiable and riotous conduct, had been completely dropped out of the New York councils, and soured with chagrin proceeded to the camp at Cambridge, where he industriously labored to convince the generals of the army that New York was a "nest of tories," and in imminent danger from them. He so misrepresented the chief men in the popular movement that many of the New-Englanders regarded New York as but a step removed from monarchical alliance. He obtained the ear of General Charles Lee, a highly cultivated production of European warfare, who, having lost the favor of the British ministry and all chance of promotion, been distinguished in the battles of Poland, and led a restless life generally, had taken up his abode in Virginia, and espoused the American cause. Prior to his appointment by Congress as major-general he had been intimate with Horatio Gates, and a frequent visitor at Mount Vernon; he was whimsical, careless and slovenly in person and dress, — for although he had associated with kings and princes

Hosted by Google

he had also campaigned with the Mohawks and Cossacks,— and was always attended by a legion of dogs that shared his affections with his horses, and took their seats by him at table. "I must have some object to embrace," he said, misanthropically. "When I can be convinced that men are as worthy as dogs, I shall transfer my benevolence, and become as stanch a philanthropist as the cantling Addison affected to be."[1] He was a general fault-finder with those in authority, and catching the notion from Sears, applied at once to Washington for an order to proceed to New York "and expel the Tories."

Washington had not yet been apprised of the vigorous measures adopted by New York, and yielded to what seemed a necessity. He charged Lee to communicate with and act in concert with the New York Congress, and himself wrote asking their co-operation. A military force would have been gladly welcomed had it been in command of an officer who respected civil authority; but when the tidings reached the metropolis that Lee, with Sears as his adjutant-general, was advancing at the head of fifteen hundred Connecticut men, without so much as intimating his design, the New York authorities were filled with just indignation. Washington scrupulously respected the civil government of each Colony as well as of congresses. Lee scoffed at it all. The Committee of Safety

Jan. 21. sent a messenger to Stamford to ask Lee that the troops of Connecticut might not pass the border until the purpose of their coming should be explained, arguing that it was impolitic to provoke hostilities from the ships of war until the city was in a better condition of defense.

Lee wrote to Washington making a jest of the letters received, calling

Jan. 23. them "wofully hysterical"; and he was careful not to soothe New York in his reply. The Committee immediately wrote to the Continental Congress, who dispatched a special committee at once to harmonize matters. Lee entered New York, February 4, on a litter, having been attacked with the gout while travelling over the rough winter

Feb. 14. roads of Connecticut, and was irritable, arrogant, and unreasonable. He conveyed the impression that his office was to conquer New York rather than offer the city protection from a foreign foe It was a cold stormy Sunday, and by a singular coincidence, Sir Henry Clinton's squadron, which had recently sailed mysteriously from Boston, appeared in the harbor about the same hour.

Two hostile forces thus facing each other over her bulwarks threw the city into convulsions; it was supposed the crisis had come, and that the streets of the metropolis would shortly be deluged with blood. Citizens

[1] *Letters of Lee to Adams.*

Hosted by Google

fled in wild dismay. Every wagon and cart that could be found was employed in transporting valuable effects into the country; boats were swiftly laden, and men, women, and children ran through the streets with white, scared faces. Whole families made their escape as best they could, taking little or much with them as the circumstances allowed. The weather was so severe that travel in every direction was attended with peculiar peril and distress. The rich knew not where to go, and the poor, thrown upon the charity of interior towns, suffered from a complication of ills. The floating cakes of ice in the rivers compelled the *Asia* and other war vessels to hug the wharves, which added greatly to the terror and confusion.[1] Never had New York seen a time of such agonized alarm, such a breaking up of homes, or such a series of business misfortunes. Hundreds of men were suddenly deprived of the means of supporting their families. Garish Harsin wrote to Mr. William Radcliff,[2] concerning a rumor that fifteen sail were in the lower bay; and said that for four days, although nothing material happened, the people scattered as fast as possible. He also said new life was given to the moving, "as if it was the Last Day," on the 7th and 8th by the arrival of Lord Stirling with one thousand men from New Jersey, and the anchoring of another British ship in full view of the city.

General Lee aspired to supreme military power, and was charmed with the opportunity of exercising a separate command from his chief; he grew amiable as the danger increased, and patronizingly conferred with the New York Committee of Safety in regard to defensive measures. He went out with Lord Stirling to "view the landscape o'er," and determine upon points where fortifications would be desirable, after which he wrote to Washington: "What to do with the city, I own, puzzles me. It is so encircled with deep navigable waters, that whoever commands the sea must command the town." He told the New York Committee that "it was impossible to make the place absolutely secure," using, perhaps unconsciously, the precise language addressed him when remonstrated with so earnestly against the introduction of New England soldiers into New York.

It was no time now to waste words. The Committee, in their anxiety to delay the bombardment of the metropolis until their ships, sent privately for powder, unmolested by the men-of-war, should have returned, and suitable preparations made for decisive action, used every argument and took every precaution to prevent the provocation of hostilities prematurely; the situation required prudent management. No representative

[1] *Tryon to Dartmouth*, February 8, 1776.

[2] *New York in the Revolution*, 86.

Hosted by Google

body of men on the continent were more thoroughly true to the country than the New York Congress and Committee of Safety, a statement no one will question after reading the simple and clear record of their daily proceedings. Their policy, so much criticised by their neighbors, was dictated by a shrewd regard for the public cause as well as their undoubted duty to care for a defenseless city; and it proved the wisest in the end. They bore the despicable abuse of Isaac Sears, who executed Lee's orders with vicious ferocity; the revilings of Waterbury, who declared that "things would never go well unless the city of New York was crushed down by the Connecticut people"; and the inconvenience of harboring so many troops from other States, who seemed impressed with the notion that they had come to chastise a stiff-necked city rather than to aid in repelling an invasion; while at the same time they were calling out the citizens to assist in fortifying the island, who responded with wonderful alacrity, — the whole people, men and boys of all ages, working with cheerful and untiring zeal.[1]

Meanwhile Clinton sent for the Mayor, and expressed much surprise and concern at the distress caused by his arrival; which was merely, he said, a short visit to his friend Tryon. He professed a juvenile love for the place, said no more troops were coming, and that he should go away as soon as possible.[2] "If this is but a visit to his friend Tryon," writes Lee, "it is the most whimsical piece of civility I ever heard of." It was a sore trial for Lee to be obliged to consult committees at every step, and he took not a few on his own responsibility; one of these was to terminate the supplying of British ships in the harbor with eatables. He wrote to Washington, February 17: "Governor Tryon and the Asia continue between Nutten and Bedlow's Islands. It has pleased his Excellency, in violation of his compact, to seize several vessels from Jersey laden with flour. It has in return pleased my Excellency to stop all provisions from the city, and cut off all intercourse with him, — a measure which has thrown the Mayor, Council, and Tories into agonies." Lee's course confirmed the notions of Congress in regard to his superior military ability, and in the midst of his schemes for New York they appointed him to the command of the newly created Department of the South. He left the city, March 7, in the same critically caustic humor as when he came, the Committee, and even Washington himself, falling under the lash of his disrespect. Reaching Virginia, he wrote to Washington that the members of the Congress of New York were "angels of decision when

March 7.

[1] *Bancroft's Hist. U. S.*

[2] Sir Henry Clinton was on his way to join Admiral Parker in his movements on South Carolina.

Hosted by Google

compared with the Committee of Safety assembled at Williamsburg." He wrote furthermore in regard to the situation of affairs, which illustrates forcibly the difficulties encountered in every part of America during this period of suspense: "I am like a dog in a dancing-school; I know not where to turn myself, where to fix myself. The circumstances of the country intersected with navigable rivers, the uncertainty of the enemy's designs and motions, who can fly in an instant to any spot they choose with their canvas wings, throw me, or would throw Julius Cæsar, into this inevitable dilemma; I may possibly be in the North, when, as Richard says, I should serve my sovereign in the West. I can only act from surmise, and have a very good chance of surmising wrong."

Lee's predictions that New York would go "into hysterics" at his departure were not realized. Lord Stirling remained in temporary command, and pushed the defenses of the city already projected as rapidly as resources permitted. He was an energetic and conspicuous officer, and with family interests and connections on every side, was stimulated to the utmost effort. A letter written on the 12th furnishes a faint glimmer of light as to what was going on in the way of preparation aside from earthworks and the sinking of batteries into cellars: —

"At New York we have a founder who has already cast 14 or 15 excellent brass field pieces. We have a foundry for iron ordnance, from 24-pounders to swivels. As to iron shot, we have plenty, and, on a pinch, could supply the whole world; and as for small arms, we are not at the least loss, except for the locks, in which branch there will soon be a great number of hands employed. The means made use of to introduce the manufacture of saltpetre has met with the desired success; so that the women make it in various parts of the country. From the various accounts, we shall by midsummer have 30 or 40 tons, or more, of our own manufacture. In one manufactory they make 50 cwt. per week. At Newbury in New England they make at least 100 lbs. per day. In short, it is now as easy to make saltpetre as it is to make soft soap. As to brimstone and lead, the bowels of our country produce more than sufficient for a war of 1000 years. In a short time we shall have at least thirty ships of war, from thirty-eight guns downwards, besides (if the ministry carry on their piratical war) a great number of privateers. When you return you will be surprised to see what the mother of invention has done for us. I wish I could convey to you a small idea of the ardor which inflames our young men, who turn out with more alacrity on the least alarm than they would to a ball."

On the 14th Washington wrote to Stirling that the enemy appeared to be on the eve of evacuating Boston, and he presumed their destination was New York. Stirling immediately sent urgent appeals for troops in every direction. Colonel Samuel Drake was already here with minute-

Hosted by Google

men from Westchester County, and Colonel Swartwout and Colonel Van Ness each with a command from Duchess County. He ordered over the Third New Jersey Regiment, and wrote to six of the nearest counties of that State for three hundred men each; while Congress sent forward five or six Pennsylvania regiments. The Connecticut men were impatient to return home to attend to their spring farming, but many of them were induced to remain two weeks beyond their term of enlistment under Waterbury and Ward, until Governor Trumbull could supply their places with troops commanded by Silliman and Talcott. In case of an alarm, they were to parade immediately at the Battery, on the Common, and in front of Trinity Church. On Long Island a guard was posted at the Narrows and another at Rockaway, to report the approach of ships, and the Sandy Hook Light was dismantled. In the city cannon were mounted in the batteries as fast as completed; and all the male inhabitants, black and white, worked by order of the Committee on the fortifications, the blacks every day, the whites every other day.[1] F. Rhinelander wrote to a friend: "To see the vast number of houses shut up, one would think the city almost evacuated. Women and children are scarcely to be seen in the streets. Troops are daily coming in; they break open and quarter themselves in any houses they find shut up. Necessity knows no law."

With the first April sunshine came General Israel Putnam, the redoubtable hero of Indian and French adventure in the old Colonial wars, having been sent forward by Washington to command New York until his own arrival. He took up his abode in the Kennedy mansion, No. 1 Broadway, which had been vacated by the family, now in New Jersey.[2] Some of his officers quartered themselves temporarily in the Watts mansion adjoining, the former city residence of the notable counselor.[3] An authentic incident is related of the manner in which Hon. John Watts, Sen., left the country. Some of his letters had been intercepted

April 4.

[1] Advertisements which illustrate the extent of slavery in the New York of that period are found in all of the newspapers of the day, of which the following is a specimen: "March 12, 1776. Run away from the subscriber, a yellow wench, named Sim; about five feet ten inches high, had on when she went away a narrow-striped homespun short gown, a wide-striped homespun petticoat, speaks good English, walks very much parrot-toed, has Indian hair, a middling likely wench. Whoever brings her to John Rutter, in Cherry Street, shall receive a handsome reward." — *Constitutional Gazette.*

[2] See Vol. I. 655. Captain Kennedy was superseded in the Royal Navy in 1766, for refusing to receive the stamp papers on board his vessel. He was placed under arrest at Morristown, New Jersey, in 1776, by the Colonial authorities, — at which time he was on half pay from the English government, — but was afterwards released on parole; the next year he was suspected of giving aid to the enemy through his wife. His situation on the fence between the two powers was precarious in the extreme.

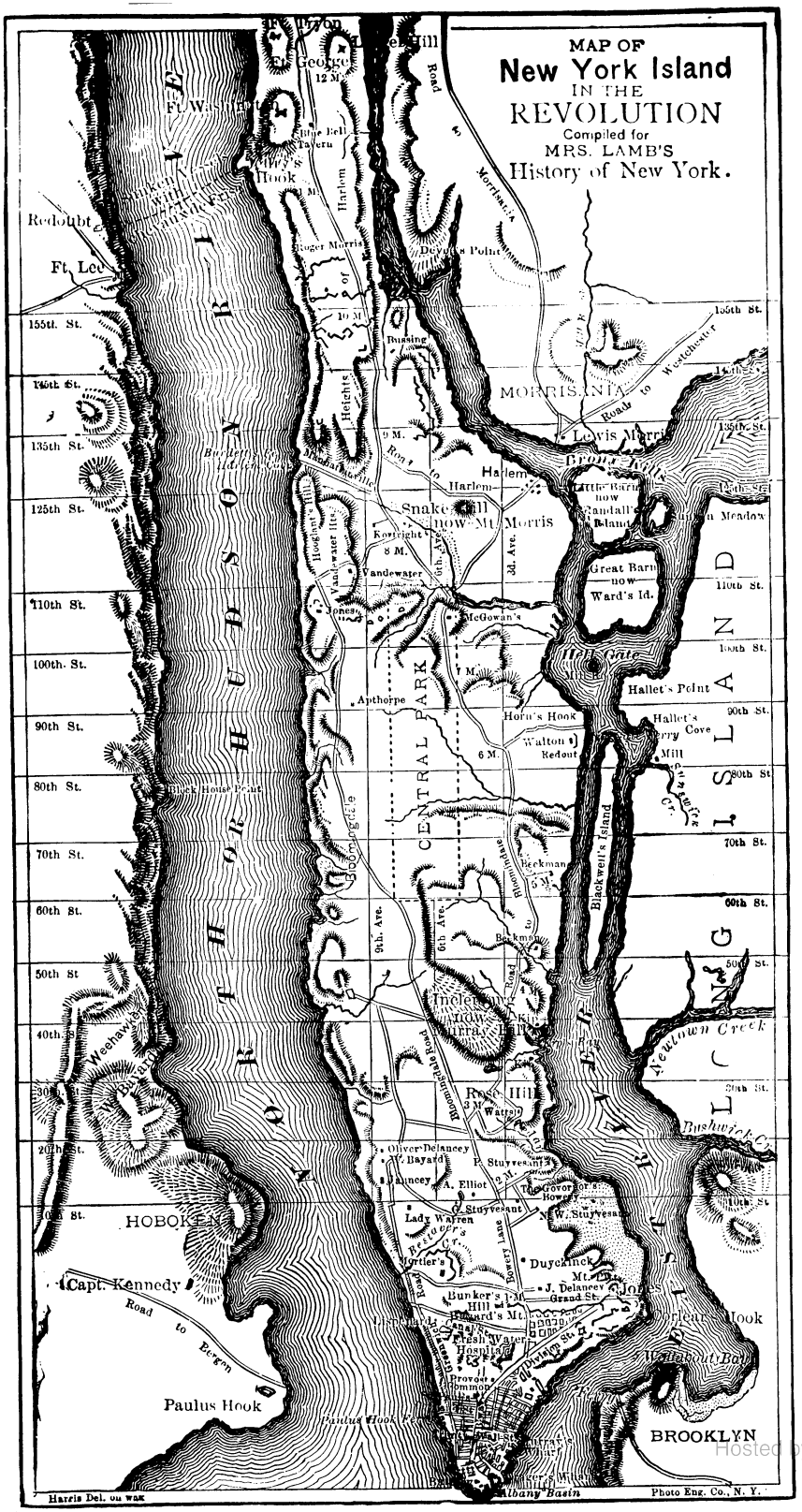
[3] See Vol. I. 501, 654, 732.

Hosted by Google

on their way to England, and read at a New York coffee-house, before a crowd of excited people, who became infuriated on the instant and surged about his dwelling, threatening violence and destruction. Judge Robert R. Livingston (the father of the Chancellor), who lived just above, on Broadway, was returning from court, dressed in his scarlet robes, and seeing the danger to his friend, — for however opposed politically, the two great leaders of opposing principles were at heart warmly attached to each other, — he mounted the steps of the Watts mansion at the peril of his life, and waved his hand to the angry multitude, commanding silence; he was gifted in oratory, and held the crowd spell-bound with his eloquence, taking the opportunity unseen to whisper directions for hiding Watts in a back building; and continued to speak until the rescue was complete, when he was escorted by the rioters to his own door with many cheers. That night Counselor Watts retired on board a man-of-war and shortly sailed for Europe. Before his departure, however, he clasped Judge Livingston in his arms, exclaiming, with passionate warmth, "God Almighty bless you, Robert; I do not believe you have an enemy in the world." Mrs. Watts accompanied her husband, but died two months after her arrival in Europe; and the death of Watts himself was announced from Wales within a brief period. Judge Livingston's own death was recorded shortly after the scene above described.

Rigorous military rule was established over the city; soldiers and inhabitants were all subjected to strict discipline. Nobody was permitted to pass a sentry without the countersign, furnished on application to a brigade-major; and any person caught in the act of holding communication with the ships in the bay was treated as an enemy. The work of intrenching went on with spirit. The batteries planned for both sides of the East River were intended to secure safe transit between Long Island and New York; there was one sunk in a cellar on Coenties Slip, near foot of Wall Street; Waterbury's Battery was located at the foot of Catherine Street, where the river was narrowest; another battery on the Rutgers lower hill; forts were being erected on Jones', Bayard's, and Lispenard's hills, north of the town, to cover the approach by land in that direction; and still another at the foot of East Eighty-eighth Street to blockade the passage at Hell Gate. That part of Fort George which faced Broadway was dismantled to prevent its being converted into a citadel; and batteries were projected along the west side of the island at various points, although it was agreed that the Hudson was so extremely wide and deep that all attempts to obstruct the passage of ships would be fruitless; works of considerable strength were in progress at Kingsbridge. The map of New York Island, on the following page, has been compiled from authentic

Hosted by Google



Hosted by Google

sources with direct reference to the convenience of the reader in tracing the course of events and armies during this rarely interesting period of American history. It serves also with its truthful lines to illustrate the wonderful growth of New York City in a century.

During the month of March, while George III. was exulting over the acquisition of twenty thousand German soldiers, and Joseph Brant, a Mohawk sachem, was standing among the courtiers at Whitehall, promising assistance from the Six Nations to chastise those "bad children, the New England people," and the ministry were strengthening their impetuous arrogance with the near prospect of victory, Washington, through a series of skillful maneuvers, in which he hazarded comparatively nothing, was actually putting the British army to flight from the city of Boston. Never before was so important a result obtained at so small a cost of human life.

Howe's orders for the instant evacuation of Boston fell upon the inhabitants who had rallied round the standard of the king like a bolt of thunder from a clear sky. They had never once dreamed of such a contingency. They had regarded the gibbet as the inevitable destination of the American patriots. Their faith was pinned to the potency of the British arms, and they laughed at fear while under such protection. Now they were stricken with horror and despair. The best that England could do for their safety was to offer a crowded passage to the shores of bleak and dismal Nova Scotia, where they must remain in exile indefinitely, dependent on monarchical charity grudgingly doled from a pinched treasury. Many of these loyalists, as in New York, were among the wealthiest and most upright people of the Colony, who acted from a principle of honor in adhering to the cause of their sovereign; others were time-servers, desperate of character, or governed in their conduct by their confidence in the strength and success of the crown. Their anguish in bidding adieu to homes and comforts and estates, as they ran wildly to and fro in the dead of night, preparing for embarkation, can easily be imagined. Eleven hundred of these "wretched beings" (so styled by Washington in his dispatches), with eight thousand valiant troops, were precipitately hustled on board one hundred and twenty transports, between the hours of four and half past nine in the morning. At ten o'clock A. M. sails were fluttering in the breeze, and the gallant forces of King George III. were scudding from the town they had been sent to punish, leaving behind them stores valued at £ 30,000, some two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon spiked, some large iron sea-mortars, which they in vain attempted to burst, and one hundred and fifty horses.[1] Several British

March 17.

[1] *Heath*, 43; *Holmes's Annals*, II. 242; *Nash's Journal*, 9, 51, 52; *Sparks*, 164.

Hosted by Google

store-ships consigned to Boston steered unsuspiciously into the harbor and were seized; one of these brought more than seven times as much powder as contained in the whole American camp. The destination of the British fleet was Halifax, but it could not be expected to tarry long in that region of inactivity. "General Howe," wrote Washington, "has a grand maneuver in view — or — has made an inglorious retreat."[1] New York was the point towards which all eyes turned, whether in hope, apprehension, or despair, its reduction being of the first importance to the mother country.

Washington marched triumphantly into Boston, meeting with a soul-stirring welcome, and made vigorous preparations for the transfer of his army to New York; not venturing to move, however, until the hostile fleet had actually put to sea from Nantasket Road, where it loitered ten days. During the last days of March several regiments were sent forward to the metropolis; the artillery were in motion on the 29th, journeying over the muddy highways to New London, thence to New York by sloop.[2] Washington left Cambridge on the 4th of April on horseback, attended by his suite, — stopping in Providence, where he was enthusiastically honored; in Norwich, where he was met by Governor Trumbull of Connecticut; in New London, where he tarried long enough to hasten the embarkation of troops awaiting his arrival; in Lyme, at the mouth of the Connecticut River, where he spent the night with John McCurdy;[3] and in New Haven, — reaching New York on the 13th of April. He established headquarters at the Richmond Hill House, and was joined by Mrs. Washington and family.

April 7.

April 9.

As if in confirmation of David Hartley's prediction in the House of Commons on the last day of February, that England in applying to foreign powers for aid was setting an example to America which might prove disastrous to all possibility of reconciliation, a secret congressional committee, of whom John Jay and Franklin were conspicuous members, dispatched Silas Deane of Connecticut to France on a mission of the utmost delicacy, that of learning how far assistance might be expected from that nation in case the Colonies should form themselves into an independent state. Deane was an accomplished, college-bred man, of elegant manners and striking appearance, accustomed to a showy style of living, equipage,

[1] *Washington to Joseph Reed*, March 28, 1776.

[2] Solomon Nash was connected with the artillery, and his private daily record of passing events has proved of great service in fixing dates and corroborating other authorities. He joined the army on January 1, 1776, in Roxbury, and his circumstantial *Journal* covers the entire year, until his return to Boston, January 9, 1777. He was a descendant of the famous Thomas Nash who figured so prominently in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

[3] See Vol. I. page 719.

Hosted by Google

and appointment, and a natural diplomat. He was chairman of the Committee of Safety in Connecticut, and his residence in Wethersfield was the rendezvous of nearly all the public characters of the period. William Livingston called it "Hospitality Hall"; Lossing speaks of it as the "Webb House."[1] He was a member of the first Continental Congress, taking his step-son Samuel B. Webb with him to Philadelphia as private secretary. He was perfectly informed on American affairs, and, Congress having already received intimation of the kindly disposition of France, he was able to accomplish the grand result desired. He sailed in April, and reached Paris in June.

The affairs of Canada were agitating the public mind at this moment also. The army was dwindling away about Quebec, where Arnold had maintained the blockade with an iron face since the fall of Montgomery. The intense cold, absence of comforts of every description, scarcity of wholesome food, sickness in camp, and the expiration of enlistments, had combined to demoralize the remnant of troops remaining. There was no uncertainty concerning the reinforcements from England destined for the relief of Quebec, which would arrive as soon as the ice should break up in the St. Lawrence River. Schuyler had appealed again and again for troops to sustain the besiegers; but Washington, with his poverty of material for defending a continent, could do little; he had sent two companies of artillery from Roxbury, in March, which he knew not how to spare, — those of Captain Eustis, and Captain Ebenezer Stevens, afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel of Artillery, who, dragging guns through the deep snow which covered the surface of New Hampshire, cutting their own roads and building their own rafts and bridges, progressed slowly. Congress, finally, in alarm at the exposed condition of Northern New York, expressed a strong desire to have four, even ten regiments detached from the forces in and about the metropolis and sent to Canada at once. Washington acquiesced shortly after he reached New York, although he

[1] Silas Deane married the widowed mother of Samuel B. Webb in 1753 (and after her death, Miss Saltonstall). The "Webb House" was where Washington and Rochambeau met in 1781, and arranged the campaign against Cornwallis in Virginia. The suites of the two commanders, consisting of forty-five persons each, were distributed among the people of Wethersfield. Only Washington and Rochambeau slept in the great double house, with its wide hall in the center, and rooms on each side with wall decorations of rich crimson velvet paper. Samuel B. Webb, afterwards general, was descended in the direct line from Richard Webb, who came to Boston from England in 1632, and in connection with Hooker, Hopkins, and Willys, settled Hartford in 1635. He was in the battle of Bunker Hill, immediately after which he was appointed aid-de-camp to Putnam; and in June, 1776, at the age of twenty-two, was made private secretary and aid-de-camp to Washington, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He was the father of General James Watson Webb, and the grandfather of General Alexander S. Webb of the New York City College.

Hosted by Google

said, "I am at a loss to know the designs of the enemy. Should they send the whole force under General Howe up the River St. Lawrence to recover Canada, the troops gone and now going will be insufficient to stop their progress; and should they send an equal force to possess this city and secure the navigation of the Hudson River, the troops left behind will not be sufficient to oppose them; and yet, for anything we know, they may attempt both." Meanwhile Congress sent a commission to Canada clothed with extraordinary power. It consisted of Dr. Franklin, Samuel Chase of Maryland, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and John Carroll, brother of the latter, a Catholic priest who had been educated in France, and spoke French like a native. They were to confer with Arnold, but their chief business was to enlist Canada into a union with the Colonies, raise troops and issue military commissions. Equipped for this journey of five hundred miles, they tarried in New York City several days. "It is no more the gay, polite place it used to be esteemed, but almost a desert," wrote the venerable priest. Lord Stirling engaged a sloop, upon which they embarked for Albany April 2, where they were warmly welcomed by Schuyler, and entertained in his handsome home for two days. On the 9th they left for Saratoga, accompanied by the General and Mrs. Schuyler, and their two beautiful black-eyed daughters, who were so full of life and vivacity that the rough ride of thirty-two miles over muddy roads speckled with snow-drifts was divested of half its tediousness. A week spent at Schuyler's hospitable and well-appointed country-seat in Saratoga, and the aged philosopher (Franklin was now a man of seventy), who had been suffering from severe indisposition, was able to proceed. Two days and a half of wagon-transit brought them to Lake George. Schuyler had gone before to prepare a bateau, upon which they embarked April 19, and pushed their way to its upper end through the floating masses of ice, sailing when they could, rowing when they must, and going ashore for their meals. Six yoke of oxen drew their bateau on wheels across the four-mile neck of land which separates the two lakes, and after a delay of five days they were afloat on Lake Champlain. They reached St. Johns in four days, and thought they had done well. Then came another day of tiresome travel in torturing calashes, which brought them to Montreal, where Arnold, who had been superseded by Wooster, before Quebec, on the 18th day of April, received them with a great body of officers and gentry, the firing of cannon, and other military honors.

April 9.

They presently found that Canada was lost. Congress had no credit there; even the most trifling service could not be procured without the payment of gold or silver in advance. The army had contracted debts

Hosted by Google

which were manufacturing enemies faster than a regiment of commissioners could make friends for America. And, shortly, the news reached Montreal that a British fleet had landed soldiers at Quebec, who had attacked and put the little American army to flight. Apparently nothing remained but to fortify St. Johns, conduct the routed army to that point, and make a desperate attempt to check the southward progress of the British into New York.

The indefatigable Schuyler assisted the travelers on their homeward journey down the lakes, entertained them at his house, and, owing to the illness of Franklin, sent his own chariot to convey them the whole distance to New York City. It was about the middle of June when they reached Philadelphia.

The tidings of Canadian reverses had preceded them, spreading consternation through the northern districts. Schuyler was accused in the most extraordinary manner. He had never been loved by the New England people, having in all the boundary disputes been the champion of New York in opposition to Eastern claims. Now, he was charged with having neglected to forward supplies and reinforcements; indeed, as the commander of the Northern department of the army, he was declared responsible for its failures and humiliations. His magnanimity in allowing Sir John Johnson to go at large was misconstrued into a crime; presently insinuations were afloat that he was untrue to America, and town-meetings were held in various places and plots concocted for his arrest and imprisonment. These base imputations were not generally advanced or countenanced; but Washington was addressed on the subject, as was also Governor Trumbull and others. Washington was indignant, said it was one of the diabolical schemes of the Tories to create distrust, and proclaimed his utmost confidence in Schuyler's integrity. Schuyler denounced the scandal as infamous, and demanded a court of inquiry.

On the 19th Washington was summoned, by Congress, to Philadelphia, whither he was accompanied by Mrs. Washington, accepting the hospitalities of John Hancock fifteen days. There were serious divisions among the members; it was known that commissioners from Parliament were on the water, coming with proposals of accommodation, the engagement of German troops by England indicated unsparing hostility, and the hazards of a protracted war were fully comprehended. The majority, however, were for vigorous measures, and it was resolved to swell the army in New York with thirteen thousand eight hundred militia, and institute a flying camp of ten thousand to be stationed in New Jersey. A war-office was established, which went into operation June 12. Among those in Congress to whom Washington turned for

May 19.

Hosted by Google

counsel concerning the interior defenses of New York at this alarming crisis, was George Clinton, whose life at the ancestral homestead in Orange County had familiarized him with the physical and topographical peculiarities of the region along the Hudson above the city. His brother, James Clinton, was stationed with a considerable force in the Highlands; he had been with Montgomery at the siege of St. Johns and the capture of Montreal, and, even earlier, while yet a beardless boy, had taken lessons in that great American military school, the French War, in which their father Charles Clinton was an efficient officer under the Crown. Both brothers were men of military genius and sound judgment.

The question of what to do with the Tories was discussed with much warmth during this conference. Many had been apprehended, some disarmed, and not a few incarcerated. To discriminate justly between those who were criminal as covert enemies, and such as indulged in a peaceable difference of opinion, was by no means easy. Rancorous partisans complained of the want of patriotic vigor in the New York Congress, because of the methods used to avoid confounding the innocent with the guilty and prevent unmerited abuse. A proposal which found favor, however, emanated from this body, that secret committees, chosen by the civil authority of each Colony, should act in connection with the military leaders in subduing an element so threatening to the chances of success. John Jay, Philip Livingston, Gouverneur Morris, Thomas Tredwell, Lewis Graham, and Leonard Gansevoort composed the earliest "Committee on Conspiracy" in New York under these resolves. They were all members of the Third New York Congress, which, elected in April, assembled about the middle of May, and continued in session until June 20.

The public fever was at its highest ebb during these dark days of expectant calamity. Mischief was brewing on every hand. Schuyler discovered that Sir John Johnson had broken his parole, and was preparing to co-operate with the British army at the head of savage bands of warriors. Colonel Elias Dayton was sent with a strong force to arrest him, but he escaped and took refuge among the Indians on the borders of the lakes, accompanied by a crowd of armed tenants. Dayton took temporary possession of Johnson Hall, seized Sir John's papers and read them aloud in the presence of his wife, the beautiful and accomplished daughter of the counselor, John Watts, and finally conveyed her ladyship as a hostage to Albany. The rumor followed quickly that Sir John was actually coming down the valley of the Mohawk prepared to lay everything waste, and Schuyler hurriedly collected such material as he could command, in the vicinity of Albany, to oppose the anticipated attack.

Meanwhile New York City was alive with conspiracies, imaginary and

Hosted by Google

real. The secret committee made out a list of suspected persons and served upon each a printed summons to appear and give security on oath that they would have nothing to do with any measures hostile to the union of the Colonies. Heading this formidable list were the counselors Oliver De Lancey, Hugh Wallace, and Charles Ward Apthorpe, who were in the habit of visiting the governor on board the *Duchess of Gordon*, in the harbor, and were said to be privately offering bribes to induce men to



The Apthorpe Mansion.

enlist in the service of the king. Apthorpe was a scholarly man of fifty, of quiet habits, cultivated tastes, and social prominence, with no special inclination to fight either for a crowned head across the water or a crown of heads upon this side. He built the stately old mansion of the sketch, one of the finest specimens of the domestic architecture of that period in America, shortly before the Revolution. It stands on the corner of Ninth Avenue and Ninety-First Street, and is known at the present time as Elm Park. Its recessed portico, Corinthian columns, corresponding pilasters, and high-arched doorway at the middle of the house opening into a hall

Hosted by Google

wide enough for a cotillion party, give it an aristocratic air even now, with its weight of years and interesting associations. Apthorpe was able to satisfy the committee in regard to his peaceable intentions. His property in New York was untouched at the close of the war (although he had large estates in Maine and Massachusetts which were confiscated), and he resided in his elegant Bloomingdale mansion, exercising the generous hospitality of a courtly gentleman of wealth, until his death in 1797. In the winter of 1789, the beauty, wealth, and fashion of New York City gathered under this roof to witness the marriage ceremony of his "lovely and accomplished" daughter Maria, to the distinguished Hugh Williamson, Member of Congress from North Carolina, a bachelor of fifty years.[1]

The President of the Third New York Congress was Nathaniel Woodhull, who had served in the French War, commanding a New York regiment under General Amherst in the final reduction of Canada in 1760. His wife was Ruth, daughter of Nicoll Floyd, and sister of William Floyd, one of the active members of the Continental Congress.[2] He was fifty-four years of age, brave, generous, upright, and a chivalrous defender of colonial rights. He was appointed a brigadier-general, for which his military training and experience had admirably fitted him, and with the first intimation of the landing of the British on Long Island, he placed himself at the head of his command.[3] In his necessary absences during the session John Haring presided over this Congress, a tall, fine-looking, dark-complexioned man of thirty-seven, of unblemished character, excellent parts, and a fluent talker. His residence was in Tappan on the Hudson, in the vicinity of which he was popular and influential, and constantly contriving measures to circumvent the Tories. In addition to his legislative duties he was actively employed in the purchase and manufacture of saltpetre, and in collecting lead. In consultation with Henry Wisner[4] months prior to this date, the subject of the practical alleviation of the most

[1] *New York Daily Gazette*, Monday, Jan. 5, 1789.

[2] See p. 20, note (Vol. II.).

[3] The next day after the battle of Long Island he was surprised by a party of Light Horse under Oliver De Lancey, Jr., near Jamaica, and seriously injured after the surrender of his sword, the wounds causing his death, September 20, 1776.

[4] Henry Wisner was born in 1720; his father was Hendrick Wisner, and his mother a New England woman. His grandfather, Johannes Wisner, was born in Switzerland, fought under Louis XIV. in the allied army of the Prince of Orange, and under the Duke of Marlborough; he emigrated to New York in the early part of the eighteenth century. Henry Wisner's residence was about a mile south of the village of Goshen; he was a justice of the peace, owned considerable land thereabouts, and a few slaves. His wife was Sarah Norton. His public services began in the New York Assembly in 1759, which position he held for ten years. — *Memorial of Henry Wisner*, by Franklin Burdge.

Hosted by Google

distressing need of the Colonies, war materials, assumed tangible form. Wisner erected three powder-mills, one in Ulster County, placed in charge of his son Henry, and two in Orange County, and despite innumerable obstacles, and the risks of being blown into the air through early crude processes of manufacture, as well as the threatened torch of the Tories, he succeeded in providing the essential, gunpowder, in quantities largely exceeding the whole product of American enterprise in this line of all the other Colonies combined. He was warmly encouraged in the work by the New York Congress, and through his energetic proceedings in the making of, not only powder, but spears, gunflints, and better roads for the transportation of necessaries to the American army, he was roundly abused and called an "Old Tyrant" by the Tory newspapers. Wisner was in attendance at the Continental Congress and voted with that body for American Independence.

In March a boyish-looking youngster of twenty, of small stature and self-confident bearing, had obtained through McDougall an appointment from the New York Congress as captain of a company of artillery. He had recently, in Columbia College, formed an amateur corps among his fellow-students for the culture of pyrotechnics and gunnery; and had for months been engaged in military gymnastics, and the study of ancient works relating to politics and war. One bright June morning, while drilling his men in a field on the outskirts of the city (now City Hall Park), he attracted the notice of General Nathaniel Greene, who, quick to detect any gleam of military art, invited him to his quarters, catechised him as to his education and opportunities, and introduced him to Washington. The youth thus brought under the special notice of the commander-in-chief was Alexander Hamilton.

The month of June was one of perpetual excitement in New York. It was rumored that the Tories were banding together for co-operation with the British army upon its arrival, intending to blow up the magazines, spike the guns, and seize and massacre Washington and his officers. Congress and its "Committee on Conspiracy" knew no rest. The facts developed that persons had secretly been enlisted and sworn to hostile acts. The lower order of liquor dealers were in numerous instances implicated and incarcerated, as well as multitudes of their customers. The private administration of justice kept the city in commotion and the members of Congress on the alert to prevent riots and disturbances therefrom.

Peter Elting wrote to Captain Richard Varick, June 13: "We had some grand Tory rides in this city this week, and one in particular yesterday; several of them [the Tories] were handled very roughly, being carried through the streets on rails, their clothes torn from their backs, and their June 13.

Hosted by Google

bodies pretty well mingled with dust." [1] Under the date to which reference is made (June 12), the following minutes were entered upon the journals of the New York Congress: —

"*Resolved*, That this Congress by no means approve of the riots that have happened this day; they flatter themselves, however, that they have proceeded from a real regard to liberty and a detestation of those persons who, by their language and conduct, have discovered themselves to be inimical to the cause of America. To urge the warm friends of liberty to decency and good order, this Congress assures the public that effectual measures will be taken to secure the enemies of American liberty in this colony; and do require the good people of this city and colony to desist from all riots, and leave the offenders against so good a cause to be dealt with by the constitutional representatives of the colony."

It was shortly discovered beyond further question that Tryon, from his safe retreat on shipboard, was working through agents on shore. Suspicion fell upon the mayor, David Matthews, and he was accordingly seized at his residence in Flatbush, Long Island, by order of Washington, at one o'clock on the morning of June 22, but the most vigilant search failed to discover treasonable papers in his possession; and nothing was subsequently proved against him except that he had disbursed money for Tryon, who had offered a bounty to all who would engage in the conspiracy.[2] James Matthews, the brother of the mayor, residing at Cornwall, Orange County, was also seized in the same manner, but he was willing to take the oath prescribed, and gave bonds to Haring, president of Congress *pro tem*, to the amount of five hundred pounds sterling, to keep the peace, and was consequently released.

June 22.

On the same evening of Mayor Matthews' arrest, the Committee met

[1] "There has lately been a good deal of attention paid the Tories in this city. Some of the worst have been carried through the streets at noonday on rails." — *Solomon Drowne, M. D., to Solomon Drowne, Senr.*, June 17, 1776. *New York in the Revolution*, 97.

"I have been cruelly rode on rails, a practice most painful, dangerous, and till now peculiar to the humane republicans of New England." — *Letter from Staten Island*, August 17, 1776.

[2] Mayor Matthews was imprisoned for a few days in New York, and then conveyed to Litchfield, Connecticut, and consigned to the care of Major Moses Seymour, a relative of his wife, Sarah Seymour Matthews. He was confined in the Seymour house, but was allowed the privilege of the village. One day, while taking his customary walk, he omitted to return, and, making his way to New York as best he could, placed himself under the protection of the British flag. Fletcher Matthews, a brother of David and James Matthews, had married into the Woodhull family, and resided in New York City. The three brothers were the sons of Vincent Matthews and Catalina Abeel (daughter of Mayor Abeel of Albany), and the grandsons of Colonel Peter Matthews, who came to this country as an officer under Governor Fletcher, in 1692. They had one sister, who married Theophilus Beekman. James Matthews married Hannah Strong, and they were the parents of General Vincent Matthews, who died at Rochester in 1846, at the head of the bar in Western New York.

Hosted by Google

at Scots Tavern in Wall Street to examine ex-Mayor Whitehead Hicks, who had been summoned before them. They desired him to show cause why he should be considered a friend to America. He said he had shown nothing by his conduct which could be interpreted as against his country; that he had for many years held honorable and lucrative Crown offices, unsolicited, and that he had repeatedly sworn allegiance to the Crown. For that reason he was not willing to take up arms for America. And as his father and brothers and some of his near relations were strongly attached to or absolutely engaged in the Colonial cause, he should never take up arms against America. He said one of his servants had joined the Continental troops as a volunteer without the least interference on his part. He was asked by the chairman whether in his opinion the British Parliament had a right to tax America, and replied that he should be very unwilling to be taxed by the British Parliament. He was asked whether he thought defense by arms justifiable, and said such a course should, in his view of the case, be the last resort, and he had not fully examined or considered whether every other necessary expedient had been previously used. After a series of similar questions and answers, it was unanimously resolved to accept his parole, and a copy was given him to sign, which he begged leave to consider for a day or two, as he feared it might interfere with his oath of office as a judge, but declared he had no other objection to it. He was allowed to take it away with him, but he returned it with his signature.

Several others were examined on the same occasion with less agreeable results. The Committee continued their investigations far into the night. Mayor Matthews was arraigned before them on the 23d, and Counselor William Axtell on the 24th, who was, however, released on parole, as was also Dr. Samuel Martin. John Willett, of Jamaica, was compelled to give a bond of two thousand pounds sterling as a pledge of good behavior. On the 25th a warrant was issued under the signatures of John Jay and Gouverneur Morris, and placed in the hands of Wynant Van Zandt, a lieutenant in Colonel Lasher's battalion, for the apprehension of Nicholas Connery, the keeper of an inn, who had been detected in selling gunpowder to the conspirators. By the 27th the plot was so far traced that Thomas Hickey, one of Washington's body-guard, an Irishman who had been a deserter from the British army, was known to have enlisted for the king, and to have used great exertions towards corrupting his comrades. He was tried by a court-martial, found guilty of mutiny, sedition, and treachery, and at ten o'clock, on the morning of the 28th, hanged in a field near the Bowery, in the presence of at least twenty thousand persons. This was the first military execution of the Revolution.

Hosted by Google

Its effects were salutary, but the arduous duties of the Committee were by no means ended. The prisons were full of persons awaiting trial, while petitions for clemency or release poured in from every quarter in one continuous stream. Sir William Howe was already at Sandy Hook, having arrived on the 25th; and he was joined by the whole British fleet and forces from Halifax on the 28th. Philip Livingston, on the morning of the same memorable day, reached the Continental Congress at Philadelphia, and taking his seat again in that body, explained the peculiar and imperative necessity for his colleagues to remain at their posts in New York while the city was in such peril; immediately following which the draft of the Declaration of Independence was first submitted by Jefferson.

June 28.

William Livingston had been in December appointed a brigadier-general over the militia of New Jersey, and on the 5th of June, while acting upon a committee of the Continental Congress, of which he was an important member, for the establishment of expresses to transmit intelligence between the Colonies with more celerity, events had hurried him to Elizabeth to assume command. At this juncture he was alive with bounding energy in the raising of troops for the defense of the exposed borders of both New York and New Jersey. He was in daily communication with his son-in-law, John Jay, and cognizant of all the measures and movements of the New York Congress and "Committee on Conspiracy." New Jersey rejoiced in a new Congress fresh from the people with ample powers for deciding her course — a Congress which organized itself June 11, and was opened with prayer by the great theological politician, Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon, President of Princeton College.[1] On the 22d a resolution had been adopted to form a state government; two days later a committee was appointed to draft a constitution, which was reported on the 26th, and confirmed July 2. William Livingston was the first choice for a governor of the new State, and, as the reader will learn in future pages, was soon transferred to the executive chair.

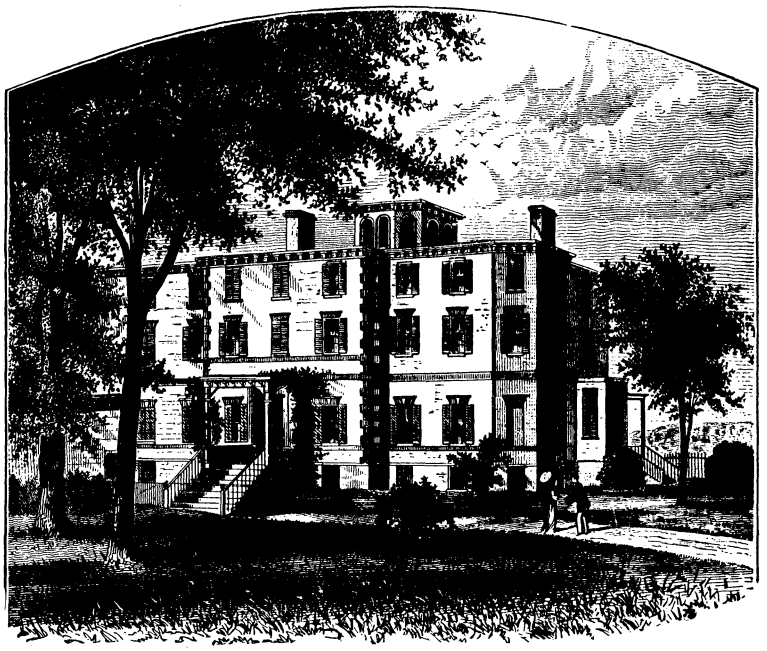
His residence in Elizabeth, familiarly known as "Liberty Hall,"[2] was the scene henceforward of many startling and romantic incidents. It was a shining mark for the enemy, for no bolder or more aggravating patriot wielded pen or power than its owner, who was styled an "arch-fiend"; and it was pointed out to the belligerent foe from over the water as the resort of the "formidable" John Jay, whose beautiful young wife spent much time with her mother and sisters within its walls. It was here that Jay's afterwards distinguished son, Peter Augustus Jay, was born, in January, 1776. The wonder is, not that the British sought the destruc-

[1] See Vol. I. 751, 752, note.

[2] See Vol. I. 758.

Hosted by Google

tion of the dwelling, but that it escaped their designs unharmed. "If the British do not burn 'Liberty Hall,' I shall think them greater rascals than ever, for I have really endeavored to deserve this last and most luminous testimony of their inveterate malice," wrote Livingston to his daughter Kitty. The original structure, with its spacious apartments, high ceilings, and narrow doors, remains intact to the present day. The upper story of the sketch has been added, as well as extensions to the rear of the edifice



"Liberty Hall."
Residence of Governor William Livingston.

to meet the requirements of later occupants; modern glass has taken the place of small panes in many of the windows; and the deep fireplaces are framed with marble mantels of a recent generation; but the innumerable little cupboards and artful contrivances in the paneling of the walls are still cherished, the old staircase proudly bears the cuts left by the angry Hessian soldiery when thwarted on one occasion in the object of their visit, and the flavor and sacredness of antiquity generally is preserved. The house stands on elevated ground some rods from the street (the old Springfield turnpike), and retains its ancient body-guard of lofty shade-trees. The larger tree in the foreground of the picture was planted by Miss Susan Livingston, the elder daughter of the Governor, in 1772. Mrs.

Hosted by Google

Livingston was a handsome, animated woman, possessing many of the strong characteristics of her notable ancestors, Philip French, Lieutenant-Governor Brockholls, and Frederick Phillips. She took a deep interest in the country's affairs, ably seconding her husband's scoffing ridicule of kingly threats; and their daughters became full-fledged politicians long ere they had attained complete physical stature. The knotty problems of the hour, and the methods and details of solving and settling them, were discussed daily at their table. Even in the most familiar correspondence with his children at school the subject uppermost in Livingston's thoughts occupied the chief space. As, for instance, in a letter to one of his boys who had written home of something which appeared in his lessons about ghosts, he said: "Should the spectre of any of the Stuart family, or of any tyrant whatsoever, obtrude itself upon your fancy, offer it not so much as a pipe of tobacco; but show its royal or imperial spectrality the door, with a frank declaration that your principles will not suffer you to keep company even with the SHADOW of arbitrary power." It was in this republican family that Alexander Hamilton made his first acquaintances upon arriving in America in 1772, a pale, delicate, blue-eyed boy of fifteen years, from the West Indies; he brought letters to Livingston from Dr. Hugh Knox, a clergyman who had become interested in his welfare in Santa Cruz, where he had been placed in the counting-house of Nicholas Cruger (formerly of New York) by his father some three years before. Through Livingston's advice he entered the school of Francis Barber in Elizabeth, but "Liberty Hall" was always open to him, and it was in listening to the table-talk of its guests, among whom were the Ogdens, Stocktons, Boudinots, and the learned Dr. Witherspoon, that he obtained his first lessons in statesmanship.[1] When his school year was ended he applied for admission to Princeton, but he desired to overleap certain details in the college course which Dr. Witherspoon esteemed incompatible with the usages of the institution, and he was admitted to Columbia instead.

Thus must we penetrate occasionally beneath the surface of historical narrative into the privacy of domestic life and behind the scenery of events, if we would trace springs of action to their source and analyze the separate parts of the great tide, which, swelling with its tributaries at every turn, was soon to overleap all barriers in its flow into the sea of substantial achievement.

[1] Many of the youth who were to become emphatically the men of the new generation were in the classes of the Rev. Dr. Witherspoon at Princeton; among whom were James Madison, Aaron Burr, Samuel Stanhope Smith, the future accomplished divine, Philip Freneau, the verse-maker of the Revolution, Hugh Henry Breckinridge, the author of "Modern Chivalry," and four future governors of States, — John Henry of Maryland, Morgan Lewis of New York, Aaron Ogden of New Jersey, and Henry Lee of Virginia.

Hosted by Google

Under the hot June skies of 1776, in town and country, in the forum and in the farm-yard, in congressional halls and in rural town-meetings, in newspapers, pamphlets, and in conferences of committees, in the pulpit, and in social gatherings, the question which was to decide the chief event in modern history was the all-absorbing topic. On one point all were agreed, — independence could only be obtained at enormous expense of life. The new political creed of the sovereignty of the people was the most heterodox of theories to the English mind; the erection of an independent empire on this Continent a problem of far greater magnitude than any which had affrighted former legislators. Nothing is more remarkable at this juncture than the superiority in argument which the legal debaters in America displayed over their contemporaries in England whenever they touched upon the professional points of the controversy. The lawyers shared with the clergy the intellectual influence of the time; they were generally well-read and accomplished men, and not infrequently men of letters. All their addresses to the powers beyond the seas reflected a depth of thought and a wide acquaintance with the principles of common and international law which astonished acute observers. John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and a score of others who had been educated in the strictest notions of rank and caste, were trained jurists, with clear conceptions of the rights of mankind, and ready for the tremendous stride in human progress which was to terminate artificial distinction and secure freedom and self-control for a nation; the Clintons, Morrises, Livingstons, Schuyler, John Jay, James Duane, and their associates of New York, reasoned with singular calmness and force, standing like a bulwark of independence between the conflicting political theories of England and America, fully prepared to dispense with the customs of centuries, abandon entails, break down the Colonial aristocracy of which they were a part, and create a republic in which the people should be the only rulers. Their wisdom exceeded the wisdom of Cromwell and his adherents, for the monarchical principle was ostracized. Their conceptions, drawn from the only free and republican government then existing, were so much broader than the source from which they sprung that no rules of action could be borrowed. Their understanding of the English law inspired them with both caution and confidence. James Duane, in Congress at Philadelphia, pledged New York to independence, at the same time declaring that he could not legally vote on the question unless empowered by further instructions from his constituents. William Floyd said he had no hope of peace through the commissioners *en route* for America, and believed the only solid foundation for government was in the consent of the people. Robert R. Livingston (afterwards Chancellor)

Hosted by Google

pointed out in clear, elegant diction the error of attempting to form alliances with foreign nations at peace, while in such a disjointed condition. John Jay, summoned from the higher Congress to the legislative councils of New York, advocated implicit obedience to the popular will. With rare legal acumen he pointed out the breakers ahead should the representatives by their acts exceed the authority in them vested, and promptly suggested close investigation; hence a committee was appointed for the purpose, who, after earnest consideration, reported a serious existing "doubt" concerning the power conferred upon this Congress in the late election as to the matter of a total dissolution of all connection with Great Britain, and solemnly recommended a formal vote of the whole Colony. The New York Congress, therefore, in accordance with a motion made by John Jay (June 11), called for a new election of deputies who should be invested with full powers for administering the government, framing a constitution for New York, and determining for her the important question of the hour.

There is no more strikingly beautiful feature in the history of New York than her honorable attitude at this moment toward her own intelligent and liberty-loving population, and toward the country of which she was the great cardinal factor. With menacing horrors on every hand, Canada teeming with military preparations, savages aroused through all her wilderness frontiers, and the chief naval power of the world in possession of her harbor, threatening her entire commerce and chief city with ruin and desolation, and with the pressure of unmerited accusations of cowardice and Toryism from her neighbors added to the perpetual clamor for stringent measures by the improvident and reckless within her own borders, she tested the public mind, giving free scope to the expression of the latest wishes of her inhabitants, and awaited the result. The election, turning on the pivot of independency, occurred June 19; nearly all of the former members were returned, specially charged to vote for an absolute separation from the Crown; but this decision could not be formally announced until the organization of the new Congress. Therefore, on the first day of July, when the illustrious fifty-one doubtful and divided men assembled in Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, to consider the "resolution respecting independency," although every Colony was represented, the delegates from New York had not yet received full power, and were excused from action.

Meanwhile men grew fierce and uncompromising, and were restrained with difficulty from the committal of overt crimes. The old feud between the Presbyterians and Episcopalians was lighted afresh and caused many incidents of a riotous character. Rev. Dr. Auchmuty, the rector of Trinity

Hosted by Google

Church, was an invalid, and had removed for the summer to New Brunswick, New Jersey. The care of the parish in his absence devolved upon the oldest assistant, Rev. Charles Inglis, who was forbidden by the citizens to pray for the king and royal family; then he was accosted and insulted wherever he went in the streets; and finally his life was threatened if he did not desist from using the liturgy according to the text. To officiate publicly and abstain from the mention of England's monarch in his supplications was to violate his oath and the dictates of his conscience. His embarrassment was very great. One Sunday morning a company of one hundred and fifty men marched into the church with drums beating and pipes playing, and bayonets glistening in their loaded guns. The audience were terror-stricken, and several women fainted. It was supposed that if Mr. Inglis should read the collects for the king and royal family he would be shot in the sacred desk. But he went on boldly to the end, omitting no portion of the service, and although there was restless and hostile demonstration, he escaped injury. The vestry interfered, and compromised the matter by agreeing to close the Episcopal churches for the present; and they were not opened again for public worship until the city was occupied by the British.

The lines of demarcation between friend and foe were daily becoming more distinctly drawn, and people were compelled to show their colors. Neutrality could not be tolerated. Men who withheld their aid and countenance were treated as enemies. Loyalists were pronounced traitors, and pursued with merciless rancor. In reference to these it seemed as if the most ordinary feelings of compassion were for the time suspended. It was unsafe to breathe a syllable against the American cause. Men secreted in the woods, swamps, and other hiding-places, with designs of joining the British as soon as they should land, were hunted like wild beasts.

An incident illustrating the spirit of the times is told of Richard Van Wyck, one of the judges of Dutchess County. A young farmer was dragged before him one morning charged with assault and battery; the cause of the assault shown on trial was the crying of "God save the king" by the person assaulted. The judge said to the accused, "You have violated the law, and it is my duty, as a magistrate, to fine you, and the sum shall be one penny." Then, putting his hand in his pocket, continued, "I will pay the fine; and the next time that man cries "God save the king," you give him a good thrashing and I will pay you for doing it." [1]

[1] Cornelius Barents Van Wyck came to America in 1660 from Wyck, a town on the river Teck, in Holland. He settled near Flatbush, Long Island, and married Anna, daughter of

Hosted by Google

Cornelius Van Wyck, the father of Judge Richard, was an efficient member of the New York Congress. He was a warm friend of Rev. Abraham Keteltas, in direct reference to whom he seconded the motion of John Jay that the clergymen members of the House be at liberty to attend at their personal convenience, their absence being esteemed no neglect of duty. Cornelius Van Wyck resided in the house near Fishkill, made famous by Cooper as the "Wharton House" of the Spy, which is at present in an excellent state of preservation. Dr. Theodorus, the elder brother of Cornelius, a man of sterling qualities, was also one of the members of this Revolutionary Congress, and his son Theodorus, afterwards a resident of the metropolis, served with great bravery in the Revolutionary army.

New York was one of the busiest spots on the western continent just now. Men were working night and day on the fortifications. Troops were coming in from all quarters of the compass, in the most picturesque and greatest variety of costumes, uniforms being as yet in the transition state. The old red coats used in the French wars had been brought from the garrets and turned to account in Connecticut; therefore, in juxtaposition with the tow frocks of home manufacture worn by her volunteers, appeared every now and then a dingy regimental of scarlet with a triangular, tarnished laced hat. Some of the Marylanders wore green hunting-shirts with leggins to match. Troops from Delaware came in dark blue coats with red facings. Some of the New Jersey riflemen were in short red coats and striped trousers, others in short blue coats, old leather breeches, light blue stockings, shoes with brass buckles, and wool hats bound with yellow. The Pennsylvania regiments were in all the colors of the rainbow, brown coats faced with buff, blue coats faced with red, brown coats faced with white and studded with great pewter buttons, buckskin breeches, and black cocked hats with white tape bindings, also blue coats faced with white; while several companies came without any coats at all, each man with but a single shirt, and that so small that the New-Englanders ridiculed them as "shoddy shirts." The Virginians were in white smock-frocks furbelowed with ruffles at the neck, elbows, and wrists, black stocks, hair in cues, and round-topped, broad-brimmed black

Dominie Johannes Theodorus Polhemus of Brooklyn. (See Vol. I. 175.) Their sons, Theodorus (born 1668, married Margarita, daughter of Abraham Brinckerhoff) and Cornelius, removed in 1733 to Dutchess County, the latter building the Van Wyck mansion ("Wharton House") in 1739, now occupied by his great-grandson, Mr. Sidney E. Van Wyck. Many of the Van Wyck descendants have been professional men and public characters. Several of the name have occupied seats in the Legislature of New York since the Revolution, and two have served their districts in Congress. Several of the family have been at one time and another aldermen of the city, and one, Pierre Van Cortlandt Van Wyck, was Recorder in 1806, 1808, 1809, 1811, and 1812.

Hosted by Google

hats, — although a little later the Light Dragoons were uniformed in blue coats faced with red or brown coats faced with green. Washington's guards wore blue coats faced with buff, red waistcoats, buckskin breeches, black felt hats bound with white tape, and bayonet and body belts of white. Hunting-shirts — "the mortal aversion of the red-coat" — with breeches of same cloth gaiter fashion about the legs, were seen on every side, and being convenient garments for a campaigning country were soon adopted by the British themselves. This was the origin of the modern trouser, or pantaloon.

The picture of the variegated throng of soldiery surging into the streets of New York for its defense will be less grotesque to the reader if viewed in connection with one passing and final glimpse of the old capital under kingly rule and silver shoe-buckles. Show and glitter marked the distinctions in society. Dress was one of the signs and symbols of a gentleman; classical lore and ruffled shirts were inseparable. It was the habit of the community to take off its hat to the gentry; and there was no mistaking them wherever they moved. Servants were always in livery, which in many instances was gorgeous in the extreme. Gentlemen appeared in the streets in velvet or satin coats, with white embroidered vests of rare beauty, small-clothes and gorgeously resplendent buckles, their heads crowned with powdered wigs and cocked hats. A lady's toilet was equally astounding: the court hoop was in vogue, brocaded silks of brilliant colors, and a mountain of powdered hair surmounted with flowers or feathers; although it is a fact worthy of remembrance that servants were servants in those days, and never assumed to copy or excel their mistresses in the style and costliness of their attire. The democratic hammer already suspended over the doomed city was to subdue the taste and change the whole aspect of the empire of fashion.



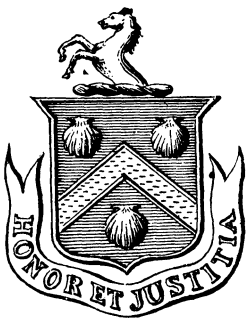
Head of a Lady of Fashion in 1776.

Jealousies arose between the troops of the different Colonies, as might have been foreseen. One evil was so serious that the New York Congress sent Gouverneur Morris to Philadelphia for its abatement. The New England troops were receiving higher wages than those of New York and the Middle Colonies, which could not be tolerated; the result of the mission was satisfactory, Congress, after much discussion, concluding

Hosted by Google

to raise the pay of the whole army to one general level. About the middle of June the New York Congress ordered the public records of the Colony removed to Kingston. Samuel Bayard, Jr., was the Royal Secretary of the Province; his office had formerly been at the right of the fort gate, but early in the spring the books and papers in his custody had been transferred to the house of his brother, Nicholas Bayard, near the present corner of Grand Street and Broadway, whose wife was Catherine, daughter of Peter Van Brugh Livingston, the Treasurer of Congress, where indeed Samuel Bayard himself had been detained a prisoner up to this time.[1] He was ordered and requested to go to Kingston and remain with the records, exercising the duties of his office (under a strong guard) until further notice. Robert Benson, the Secretary of Congress, was directed to assist and attend

[1] The Bayards were of the ancient aristocracy of New York (see Vol. I. 128, 244, 342), and men of wealth and culture. They were descended from Samuel Bayard, and Anne, the stately sister of Governor Stuyvesant. The latter, a widow, brought three sons to America in 1647, BALTHAZAR, NICHOLAS, and PETRUS. Samuel, above mentioned, was the great-grandson of NICHOLAS, and grandson of the Samuel who married Margaret Van Cortlandt in 1701 (see Vol. I. 451); he at a later date entered the king's service, and in 1778 married Catharine Van Horne. William Bayard, who was at the head of a mercantile house and resided at this time on a fine estate adjoining the villa of Oliver De Lancey on the Hudson near Thirty-fourth Street, was the great-grandson of BALTHAZAR. He sympathized with the Whigs in the early part of the controversy, gave dinner-parties which were attended by Jay, Morris, and others, entertained Josiah Quincy when he passed through New York on his way home from the South, and was generally regarded as a patriot; but he subsequently took the oath of loyalty to the king, went to England, and his property was confiscated. John Bayard, of the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety and afterwards colonel in the army, was the great-grandson of PETRUS, whose descendants settled in the Middle Colonies, and have in the course of two centuries intermarried with the Washingtons of Virginia, the Carrolls of Maryland, the Stocktons, Kirkpatricks, and Kembles of New Jersey, the Bowdoins and Winthrops of Massachusetts, the De Lanceys, Jays, Livingstons, Pintards, Schuylers, Stuyvesants, Verplancks, and Van Rensselaers of New York, and other notable American families. Colonel John Bayard removed from Philadelphia to New Brunswick after the war, where he was a presiding judge, a trustee of Princeton College, and in 1790 was elected mayor of that city. His son, James Ashton Bayard, married Eliza, daughter of Rev. Dr. John Rodgers, of the Brick Church, New York; Samuel married Martha, daughter of Lewis Pintard and Sarah Stockton (sister of Richard Stockton, the signer); he was sent to England by Washington to prosecute some important legal claims, and afterwards filled several offices of trust; Jane married Chief Justice Kirkpatrick of New Jersey; Margaret married Samuel Harrison Smith, editor of the *National Intelligencer* in Washington. An interesting relic of PETRUS BAYARD is a large and heavy folio Bible printed at Dordrecht in 1690, illustrated with curious maps and engravings, with family record written in Dutch; it is in the possession of Mrs. General James Grant Wilson of New York, one of the descendants. Four of the Bayards have occupied seats in our national Senate during the present century, of whom is Hon. Thomas F. Bayard, present United States Senator from Delaware.



Bayard Arms.

Hosted by Google

Bayard in the removal of the records, and James Beekman was directed to provide a sloop and accompany him on the passage to Fishkill, while Dirck Wyncoop, Colonel Abraham Hasbrouck, Joseph Gasherie, and Christopher Tappan were delegated with authority to provide accommodations for the records and the Secretary in Fishkill, also proper guards and other securities. With less ceremony and greater secrecy, the Treasurer and Secretary of Congress, Peter Van Brugh Livingston and Robert Benson, conveyed its money and papers on Saturday, June 30, to White Plains, where it was thought best for Congress to meet on Monday, July 2. On the same Saturday, Colonel Joseph Marsh was sent to Governor Nicholas Cooke of Rhode Island for powder in his custody belonging to New York. Jacobus Van Zandt was chairman of a committee entrusted with the delicate and dangerous task of bringing vessels and cargoes which had been seized from the enemy from their anchorage in Fire Island Inlet to the city, and selling them for the public interest. He was also, with Comfort Sands and Evert Bancker, an auditing committee required to make correct statement to Congress of all the cargoes of vessels in the port, and of the amount of lead and powder in charge of the custodians, Richard Norwood and Colonel Peter Curtenius, which they hurriedly removed in the night from a store near the Battery to a cellar on Murray Hill. Another committee, acting with the soldiery, transferred the cattle on the Long Island and Jersey shores beyond the immediate reach of the enemy. Colonel John Broome and Colonel Robert Van Rensselaer consigned several prisoners to the committee of Kingston, with directions to procure good lodgings and board for them at their own (the prisoners) expense, see that they carry on no correspondence or give no intelligence whatever to their friends, and treat them with humanity. These were chiefly British officers and their families and servants captured on transports from Scotland. June 30.

Washington was in almost hourly consultation with the leading members of the New York Congress, several of whom were already in the military service. General Alexander McDougall was exerting every nerve to prepare his battalion of New York men for efficient work. General John Morin Scott commanded the battalions which represented the city distinctively;[1] the oldest of these, under the immediate command of Colonel

[1] John Morin Scott was born in New York in 1730, died 1784. He was the only child of John Scott and Marian Morin, and fourth in the line of descent from Sir John Scott, Baronet of Ancram, County Roxbury, Scotland, who died in 1712. He was a graduate of Yale, and became one of the most successful lawyers at the bar of New York. In connection with William Livingston and William Smith he early became identified with the Whig element of the Colony and a leader in politics. He contributed to the *Independent Reflector* and other papers, and was the author of several official and literary papers and reports. From 1757 to 1762 he

Hosted by Google

John Lasher, a man of property and influence, was composed of young men of high position, its captains being John J. Roosevelt, Henry G. Livingston, John Berrian, Abraham Van Wyck, William A. Gilbert, Abraham P. Lott, Samuel Tudor, William Leonard, James Alner, and James Abeel. Andrew Stockholm, Robert Smith, Isaac Stoutenburg, and William Malcolm were also efficient officers under Scott; Colonel Samuel Drake of Westchester, and Colonel Cornelius Humphrey of Dutchess County, each commanded one of Scott's regiments. All officers and men not on actual duty were drilling and flying to their alarm-posts in order to become throughly acquainted with the grounds, and all fatigue parties were directed to hold themselves ready for instant action.

It was in vain to speculate concerning the point most likely to be first attacked by the British. The redoubts and breastworks along the shore of the East River were in a certain sense formidable, but the enemy might effect landings in any number of places elsewhere. The Hudson River was open to them, or they could cross from Staten Island into New Jersey, and thence nearly surround the city. No satisfactory judgment could be formed of their intentions.

Meanwhile the scene was like one vast beehive. Soldiers and civilians ran hither and thither, every man in the performance of some exacting duty. Aside from the numerous fortifications and batteries in and around New York, on Governor's Island, and on Long Island, barricades were thrown up on every street leading to the water, chiefly of mahogany logs taken from West India cargoes. City Hall Park was almost entirely inclosed; Broadway was obstructed in front of St. Paul's Chapel; another barrier rose at the head of Vesey Street, one at the head of Barclay, and one at the head of Murray Street. A curiously constructed barricade stretched across Beekman Street at the Brick Church, and another was piled up in the form of a right angle near where the *Tribune* building now stands. There was a bulwark at the entrance to Centre Street, another crossed Frankfort Street, and still another near it faced Chatham Street. Thus, when the British should gain a footing in the city, they would still have to contest every inch of progress. A queer little fleet, commanded by Benjamin Tupper, scoured the waters along the New Jersey and Long Island coasts to prevent communication between the Tories and the enemy's ships. It was made up of schooners, sloops, row-galleys, and whale-boats, and, keeping a perpetual lookout, was no insignificant element of defense.

was an alderman of the Out Ward; and he associated himself with many public enterprises for the social advancement of the city. His residence was about the corner of Thirty-third Street and Ninth Avenue, with over one hundred and twenty-three well-cultivated acres of land. In 1777 he was appointed Secretary of the State, and served also as State Senator until his death. His remains rest in Trinity churchyard.

Hosted by Google

On the Jersey shore the veteran warrior, Hugh Mercer, commanding the Flying Camp stationed at Amboy, and William Livingston, at the head of the Jersey militia, watched the movements of the enemy as they proceeded to encamp on Staten Island, and prevented all foraging incursions into the Jerseys.

Such was New York's condition on the sultry Monday, July 2, when, in the language of John Adams, "the greatest question ever debated in America, and as great as ever was or ever will be debated among men," was agitating the mind of Congress at Philadelphia to such intensity of enthusiasm that the members lost all sense of the appalling dangers which threatened their entire seacoast and chief city. The push of a century was behind them. The daring men whose names were to make the age illustrious were alive in every fibre. The incomparable force of conflicting opinions developed hidden mental strength, and gave expression to impalpable influences of which the air was full The immortal state paper, the confession of faith of a rising empire, seemed charged with electricity, and the heart of Congress warmed and beat more swiftly as the conviction deepened that in its adoption a bill of rights would be passed for humanity at large, and for all coming generations without any exception whatever. The discussion was conducted with closed doors, and ere nightfall a vote had been taken which was to command the admiration of the world. The following day was occupied in closely scanning the language and principles of the document as submitted by Jefferson. On the evening of July 4 it was formally adopted and entered on the journal of Congress.

July 2.

July 4.

Thus was the transition from vassalage to independence accomplished in the midst of the most serious alarms. Thus a republic was inaugurated. Thus a nation was born. The Declaration of Independence was immediately published to the world. But no signatures were yet appended to it. On July 19 it was ordered to be engrossed on parchment and signed; after which several days elapsed before it was perfected.



Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1776.

July - December.

MOMENTOUS EVENTS.

INDEPENDENCY PROCLAIMED. — THE NEW YORK CONVENTION AT WHITE PLAINS. — READING OF THE DECLARATION AT CITY HALL IN WALL STREET. — HOSTILE SHIPS SAIL UP THE HUDSON. — AGITATION OF THE CITY. — ARRIVAL OF LORD HOWE. — INTERCOURSE WITH WASHINGTON. — ARMY OFFICERS. — BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND. — THE DEFEAT. — THE RETREAT. — THE CONFERENCE. — EVACUATION OF THE CITY. — OCCUPATION BY THE BRITISH. — BATTLE OF HARLEM HEIGHTS. — THE GREAT FIRE OF 1776. — THE MARCH TO WHITE PLAINS. — ADVANCE OF THE BRITISH. — BATTLE OF WHITE PLAINS. — WASHINGTON'S CHANGE OF POSITION. — DEATH OF COLDEN. — CAPTURE OF FORT WASHINGTON BY THE BRITISH. — DISASTERS. — MARCH THROUGH NEW JERSEY. — GENERAL CHARLES LEE. — CROSSING THE DELAWARE. — CAPTURE OF TRENTON BY WASHINGTON. — THE NEW YORK PRISONS. — CONDITION OF THE AMERICAN ARMY.

NO telegraphic flash announced the final action of the Continental Congress to the remotest quarters of the globe while yet the gladdened throng outside the closed doors of Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia were filling the air with huzzas in unison with the joyous peals from the State House bell. Solitary horsemen and slow stages conveyed the intelligence to the various towns and cities of the land. It was received with such public exultation that the murmurs of discontent and disapprobation were lost in the general uproar.

New York received the news on the 9th, and on the evening of that
July 9. day, at the same hour on which Nassau Hall at Princeton was grandly illuminated and Independency proclaimed therefrom under a triple volley of musketry, the Declaration was read, by order of Washington, at the head of each brigade of the army in New York and vicinity. It was received with enthusiastic demonstrations of delight; and amid the ringing of bells and jubilant shouts the multitude proceeded to the Bowling Green and demolished the equestrian statue of George III., the lead to be run into bullets "to assimilate with the brains of the adversary." As some of the soldiers were implicated in this popular effervescence, Washington the next morning in his general orders denounced the

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google



"Thousands of the principal inhabitants of the City and County listened to the reading of the document with rapturous approbation. And at the same time the king's coat-of-arms was brought from the court-room and burned amid thrilling cheers." Page 93.

Hosted by Google

proceeding as having the effect of a riot, and strictly forbade such irregularities in future.

On the morning of the same day the newly elected Congress of New York, styled the "Convention," assembled in White Plains, General Woodhull presiding, and listened to the reading of the immortal document. Thirty-eight men of sound and discriminating judgment were present, representing the Dutch, English, and Huguenot elements of the Province. They knew that for the inhabitants of New York ultimate success could only be secured through years of sorrow, during which they were sure to be impoverished, while death stared from every part of their territory. The Morrises must abandon their fine estates to the ravages of the enemy; Jay must prepare to see his aged parents driven from the old homestead at Rye to wander and perish; Van Cortlandt, Van Rensselaer, Schuyler, and the Livingstons must sacrifice ancestral wealth and circumstance, with all their feudal train, for the democratic level of the new departure; and the sterling men from Tryon County must face the scalping-knife. But they had counted the cost dispassionately, and with one voice resolved to sustain the Declaration, "at the risk of their lives and fortunes." They directed it to be proclaimed with beat of drum in White Plains, and in every district elsewhere, and at the same time sent a swift message to their delegates in the Continental Congress, empowering them to vote for the people of New York. By this decree the complete union of the old thirteen colonies was consummated, and the whole character of the contest changed. A separate and independent nation unfurled its flag. And New York was declared a sovereign State.

The English ministry were confident of crushing New York into subjection. And yet, with the cup of misery foaming at her lips, New York through her Convention boldly ordered the Declaration of Independence to be proclaimed from the City Hall in Wall Street, in the most public manner, and in the very face of the enemy's guns. This was done July 18, thousands of the principal inhabitants of the city and county listening to the reading of the document with rapturous approbation. And at the same time the king's coat-of-arms was brought from the court-room and burned amid thrilling cheers.[1] July 18.

This occurrence speaks more directly from the real heart of New York, in view of the consternation which had prevailed in the city for six days. Scarcely twenty-four hours had elapsed since Washington had advised the Convention to remove all women, children, and infirm persons at once, as the streets must soon be "the scene of a bloody conflict." On the afternoon of the 12th a nautical movement in the harbor July 17. July 12.

[1] *Tryon to Lord Germain*, August 14, 1776; *Diary of the Revolution*, 271.

Hosted by Google

led observers to suppose New York would be immediately attacked. Two large ships, with three tenders, left their moorings near the Narrows and bore down upon the city. Officers and troops flew to their alarm-posts and made ready for battle. Women with young children in their arms ran shrieking from the lower districts near the Battery, and others, carrying bundles and wringing their hands and weeping, quartered themselves along the Bowery Road. The roar of cannon from the various batteries confirmed every fear, the Americans having opened upon the vessels. The decks of the *Phœnix* and the *Rose*, however, were protected with sand-bags, and, taking advantage of a fine wind, they sailed proudly by the city unharmed, replying with only a few random shots which crashed through deserted houses without doing further injury. Towards evening the firing ceased; but ere the supper-hour arrived, clouds of smoke from booming guns in the direction of the sullen fleet at Staten Island brought every spy-glass again into requisition. The enemy were saluting a ship of the line coming in from sea with flying colors. It was the transport of the Admiral, Lord Howe. Meanwhile, horsemen were galloping furiously along the roads to the north, bearing messages from Washington to his generals in the Highlands, and also a letter of warning to the Convention at White Plains. The ships had not been sent up the Hudson without purpose, and whether to cut off Washington's communication with the country, take soundings in the river, or arm the Tories preparatory to the grand attack, it was equally important to circumvent their enterprise. The posts in the Highlands were as yet scantily manned. General Thomas Mifflin commanded the Philadelphia troops stationed at Fort Washington and Kingsbridge, and was immediately on the alert. At nine o'clock the next morning an alarm-gun from General James Clinton at Fort Constitution thundered through the echoing defiles of the mountains opposite, and roused his brother, George Clinton, who, after voting for independence at Philadelphia had hurried home to take command of the militia of Ulster and Orange Counties. Anticipating orders, the intrepid legislator sprang into his saddle, and had stirred up the whole country along the river by the time Washington's express reached him. The ships of war anchored themselves quietly in Tappan Sea, where the river is broad, and sent out barges at night on mysterious errands. It was surmised that they were in communication with forming companies of Tories on shore, and possibly bent on the destruction of certain vessels of war in progress of construction at Poughkeepsie. One of the able allies of Washington at this crisis was Colonel Philip Van Cortlandt, of the old and honorable colonial family who figured so prominently in the first century of our history, and who founded Cortlandt manor; he

July 13.

Hosted by Google

commanded the regiment detailed to guard the public stores at Peekskill. He was a brilliant young man of twenty-seven, and proved a most efficient officer. He was the son of the proprietor of the manor at that time, Pierre Van Cortlandt, who was soon to be made the first lieutenant-governor of New York as a State, the grandson of Philip Van Cortlandt and Catharine De Peyster,[1] and great-grandson of Honorable Stephanus Van Cortland and Gertrude Schuyler. Both father and son had nobly declined the offers of royal favors, honors, grants of land, etc., if they would abandon the popular cause, made by Tryon when he visited them at the old manor-house for a few days in 1774. The younger Van Cortlandt destroyed a major's commission sent him by Tryon, and in the service of the new nation acquitted himself with exceptional ability.

Lord Howe's mission was peace. He had no very clear conception of the actual condition of affairs in America, and greatly overestimated the extent of his powers. He was a manly, good-natured, brave, unsuspicious nobleman, who thought to conciliate by overtures, which the able-minded of America regarded as an attempt to corrupt and disunite them. The propositions he brought from the ministry left untouched the original causes of complaint, and virtually offered nothing but pardon on submission. He was vaguely authorized to ride about the country and converse with private individuals on the subject of their grievances, and report opinions. But he was strictly forbidden to treat with Congresses, either continental or provincial, or with any civil or military officer holding congressional commissions. In earnest conference with his brother, General Howe, his views were confirmed as to the readiness of a large majority of the inhabitants of New York and New Jersey — and of Connecticut even — to prove their loyalty, if protected.

His first step was to address a letter to "George Washington, Esq.," which he sent in charge of an officer under a flag of truce; Colonel Henry Knox, Colonel Joseph Reed, and Washington's private secretary, Samuel B. Webb, went out in a barge, meeting Lord Howe's messenger at a point about half-way between Staten and Governor's Islands. The officer, standing, hat in hand, bowed low, and said he was the bearer of a letter to "Mr. Washington." Colonel Reed, also bowing, with his head uncovered, said he knew of no such person. The officer produced the letter. Colonel Reed said it could not be received with the superscription it bore. The officer expressed much disappointment, and said Lord Howe lamented the lateness of his arrival; the contents of the letter were of moment, and he wished it might be received. Colonel Reed declined with polite decision, and the parties separated. In a few moments the

[1] See Vol. I., 606, genealogical note.

Hosted by Google

officers' barge was put about to inquire how "Mr. Washington" chose to be addressed. Colonel Reed replied that the General's rank was well known to Lord Howe, therefore the question needed no discussion. The interview closed with courteous adieus.

On the same day Lord Howe sent copies of his declaration in circular letters to the governors to Amboy, under a flag of truce; these papers fell into the hands of General Mercer, who sent them to Washington, by whom they were at once transmitted to Congress, and published for the benefit of the people who had expected more and better of England's commissioners. The result was increased inflexibility of determination, and greater unity of action on the part of the patriots. Congress delayed no longer, but caused their own great state paper of the 4th to be engrossed and signed. Of this last solemn transaction a humorous incident is related. Benjamin Harrison of Virginia (the father of William Henry Harrison, ninth President of the United States) was a large, portly gentleman, while Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts was small, slender, and spare. As Harrison threw down the pen after affixing his signature to the document, he turned to Gerry with a smile, saying: "When the hanging scene comes to be exhibited I shall have the advantage over you on account of my size. All will be over with me in a moment, but you will be kicking in the air half an hour after I am gone."

The day following the reading of the Declaration from the City Hall in Wall Street, General Howe sent an officer with a flag to learn whether Colonel Patterson, the adjutant-general of Lord Howe, could be admitted to an interview with Washington. The request was granted, and an appointment made for the following morning. At the hour specified, Colonel Reed and young Webb went down the harbor to meet Colonel Patterson, took him into their barge, and with much lively conversation escorted him to the city.[1] The customary precaution of blindfolding was omitted, a courtesy warmly acknowledged by the British officer. They rowed directly in front of the grand battery, and landing, conducted their guest to the Kennedy House, No. 1 Broadway, where he was received by Washington with much form and ceremony, in full military costume, "elegantly attired," with his officers and guards about him. Colonel Patterson addressed him by the title of "Excellency," apologized for the commissioners, who meant no disrespect,

July 19.

July 20.

[1] Colonel Reed was thirty-five years of age at this time. He was a native of Trenton, New Jersey, graduated from Princeton College at the age of sixteen, and went to England to complete his studies prior to the practice of his profession in Trenton. In 1770 he revisited England and married a daughter of Dennis De Berdt, agent of Massachusetts. A brother of Mrs. Reed had concerted with Lord Howe before he sailed for this country in the preparation of conciliatory letters for several prominent Americans.

Hosted by Google

and produced, but did not offer, a letter bearing the inscription, "George Washington, Esq., &c., &c., &c.," which, as it implied everything, it was hoped would remove all obstacles in the way of correspondence. Washington replied that three *et ceteras* might mean everything, but that they also implied anything; and that he could not with propriety receive a letter from the king's commissioners addressed to him as a private person, when it related to his public station. Colonel Patterson then attempted to communicate, as far as he could recollect, the substance of what was contained in the epistle. Lord Howe and his brother were invested with exceedingly great powers, and were very desirous of healing all difficulties. Washington replied that he had read their declaration, and found they were merely empowered to grant pardons. The Americans, having committed no wrong, wanted no pardons; they were only defending what they considered indisputable rights. Colonel Patterson seemed confused, and remarked that this would open a wide field for argument. He manifested great solicitude concerning the results of the interview, which was conducted with stately courtesy by all concerned. Washington invited him to partake of a collation prepared for him, and he was introduced to the general officers. After many graceful compliments he took his leave, asking, "Has your Excellency no commands to my Lord or General Howe?" "None, sir, but my particular compliments to both of them," was the courtly reply. General Howe, in writing an account of this conference to the ministry, observed, "The interview was more polite than interesting; however, it induced me to change my superscription for the attainment of an end so desirable, and in this view I flatter myself it will not be disapproved." Henceforward all letters from the British commanders to Washington bore his proper title.

Lord Howe was humiliated when the truth of the actual and powerless nature of his commissions entered his soul. He was more than half inclined to act upon the suggestion contained in a letter from Dr. Franklin, and relinquish a command which would compel him to proceed by force of arms against a people whose English privileges he respected, and whose wrongs he heartily desired to see redressed.

At this crisis all manner of sectional and personal jealousies were disturbing the even tenor of preparations for the conflict. The troops from the different Colonies regarded each other with curiosity, which not infrequently developed into animosity. Those wearing high-colored uniforms fashionably cut sneered at the irregulars in homespun tow. The officers were more troublesome even than the men: of Maryland and Virginia, where military rank was sharply defined, they were mostly from the cities, and of aristocratic habits; of Connecticut, though men of reputation and

Hosted by Google

wealth, they were often elected by the men out of their own ranks, and distinguished only by a cockade. Then, again, pride of equality prevailed to such extent that every one insisted upon his own opinion, and was ever ready to question the wisdom of those above him. It required the utmost tact and discretion to harmonize these bewildering elements and maintain the semblance of proper discipline over all.

A clash between the two generals, Schuyler and Gates, who had in charge the northern frontier, caused anxious forebodings. General Sullivan, who had conducted the retreat of the American army from Canada, was deeply hurt when Gates, his former inferior in rank, was appointed over him. The command of Gates was totally independent of that of Schuyler while the army was in Canada. But the moment it crossed the line it was within the limits of Schuyler's command. Thus there were two generals in the field with corresponding authority over the same troops. A council of war decided to abandon Crown Point and fortify Ticonderoga, and for a time the two authorities worked in unison to prevent the invasion of New York by the British from the north.

Tidings from the Southern department of the repulse of Sir Henry Clinton in an attack upon Charleston was of a more cheering character. General Lee wrote begging Washington to urge Congress to furnish more cavalry. With a thousand of this species of troops he declared he could insure the safety of the Southern provinces. About the beginning of August the squadron of Sir Henry Clinton anchored, as if suddenly dropped from the clouds, in New York Bay.

General Putnam was busy during the hot days of July in planning a mechanical obstruction to the channel of the Hudson opposite Fort Washington, which, however, practically came to nothing. A scheme for destroying the fleet in the harbor with fire-ships, proposed by Ephraim Anderson, an adjutant in one of the New Jersey battalions, occupied considerable attention about the same time, but the arrival of a hundred sail, with large reinforcements of Hessians and other foreign troops to "assist in forcing the rebels to ask mercy," necessitated its abandonment. The *Phœnix* and the *Rose*, in Tappan Sea, were attacked in a spirited manner on the 3d of August by six of Tupper's row-galleys, and a brisk firing was kept up for two hours, when the commodore gave the signal to retire. An attempt at submarine navigation also awakened no little interest during the same period of suspense. David Bushnell of Saybrook, Connecticut, invented a novel machine for the purpose of blowing up the entire British shipping. It was ingeniously constructed of pieces of oak timber with iron bands, the seams calked, and the whole smeared with tar. It was large enough for a man to stand or sit inside,

Aug. 3.

Hosted by Google

the top shaped to the head, with thick glass inserted for light; it was balanced with lead, and two forcing-pumps managed by the feet enabled its occupant to rise or sink at pleasure. It had a rudder, a pocket-compass fastened near a bit of shining wood (for light at night), and a glass tube inclosing cork for measuring depth of sea. It could be rowed horizontally under water by means of two paddles revolving upon an axletree in front like the arms of a windmill, and turned by a crank inside. To its back was attached by a screw, an egg-shaped magazine containing one hundred and thirty pounds of gunpowder, also a clock, a gunlock, and a flint. The withdrawal of the screw started the clock, which, after running thirty minutes, would strike and fire the powder. The magazine was to be fastened into the bottom of a ship, the performer escaping while the clock ticked out its minutes prior to the explosion. Ezra Lee, of Lyme, Connecticut, a sergeant under Parsons, was sent out one dark night (just after the retreat from Long Island) to make the experiment, a party in whale-boats towing him within easy distance of the fleet. He descended under one of the largest ships, but, owing to an iron plate above the copper sheathing, could not fasten the apparatus. He tried to force the screw into the ship's bottom in various spots, until warned by the light of early dawn that it was too late for further effort at that time. Then he commenced his perilous return of four miles to the city, where Putnam, Parsons, and others stationed on the wharf awaited results. Off Governor's Island he was discovered by the British soldiers, who gathered in great numbers on the parapet to watch his queer motions, and finally rowed after him in a barge. As an act of defense he disconnected the magazine; and it exploded throwing high into the air a prodigious column of water with a deafening roar, which sent his pursuers paddling swiftly back from whence they came, dazed with fright.

The city was like a furnace during August. Mrs. Washington was on her way to Virginia; and the other ladies, wives of the general officers, who had enlivened headquarters by their presence, had been sent out of the way of the coming storm. There was sickness on every side; soldiers from the country were constantly falling ill; "the air of the whole town seems infected," wrote Volckert Peter Douw.[1] Alarms were perpetual. It

[1] Volckert Peter Douw was one of the able supporters of the Revolution. He was the representative of a substantial Dutch family, the ancestor of whom, Volckert Jansen Douw, a man of wealth and influence, settled on the Hudson in 1638, whose descendants have intermarried with the Van Rensselaers, Beekmans, Banckers, Ten Broecks, De Peysters, Van Cortlandts, Livingstons, and other leading families. Volckert Peter was born in 1720, and died in 1801. He was the Vice-President of the first New York Congress, and held many important positions in social and civil life. His father was Petrus Douw, who built the old house at Wolvenhoeck (the Wolves Point) Greenbush, in 1723, with bricks brought from Holland,

Hosted by Google

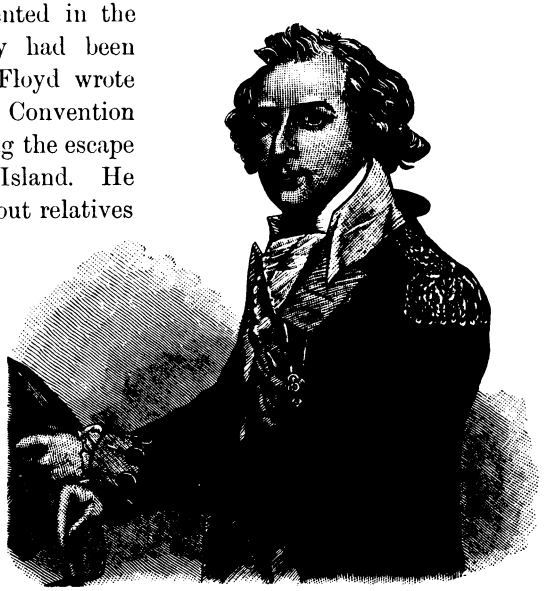
was confidently rumored that the British intended to "put all to the sword." It was suspected that they would attempt to surround Manhattan Island. Some of Washington's advisers thought he was only endangering the army by remaining in New York, and counseled evacuating and burning the city. John Jay regarded this course proper if the post could not be held; perched in the Highlands, the Americans might baffle England's experts in the art of war for an indefinite period. Congress, less gifted in warfare than in constructing an empire, abounded with impracticable resolutions. New York must be defended under every disadvantage. To do this it was plain that the Heights of Brooklyn must be held, as also Governor's Island, Paulus Hook, and the posts along the Hudson — points separated by water, and some of them fifteen miles apart — and the army to be thus distributed numbered less than seventeen thousand, of whom full one fifth were sick and disabled from duty. Few regiments were properly equipped, in several the muskets were not enough to go round; scarcely six thousand of the soldiers had seen actual service, and skilled artillerymen were altogether wanting. Before them was an armada outnumbering in both ships and men that which Philip II. organized for the invasion of England in 1588. It was snugly anchored in a safe haven between Sandy Hook and Staten Island, with no possibility of being scattered by any providential storm. It was a spectacle of surpassing brilliancy. Thirty-seven men-of-war and four hundred transports formed a bristling forest of masts. Trustworthy spies reported forty thousand disciplined warriors (accurately the number was about thirty-five thousand), including the seven thousand eight hundred Hessians purchased by King George at the rate of $34.50, per man killed, reckoning three wounded as one dead.

In the urgency of danger Washington called for volunteers, however brief their terms of service. Connecticut responded as best she could, her population being already largely represented. The Convention of New York called upon the militia to form temporary camps on the shores of the Hudson and the Sound, and to aid in repelling the enemy wherever they were most needed. The farmers dropped their scythes and cycles with surprising alacrity, and manfully shouldered their muskets. King's County, Long Island, being reputed a stronghold of Tories, the Convention ordered that any of the militia in that county refusing to serve should be immediately disarmed and secured, and their possessions laid waste.

and his mother was Anna Van Rensselaer, great-granddaughter of the first Patroon, and also the great-granddaughter of Anneke Jans. His wife was Anna De Peyster, great-granddaughter of Johannes De Peyster.

Hosted by Google

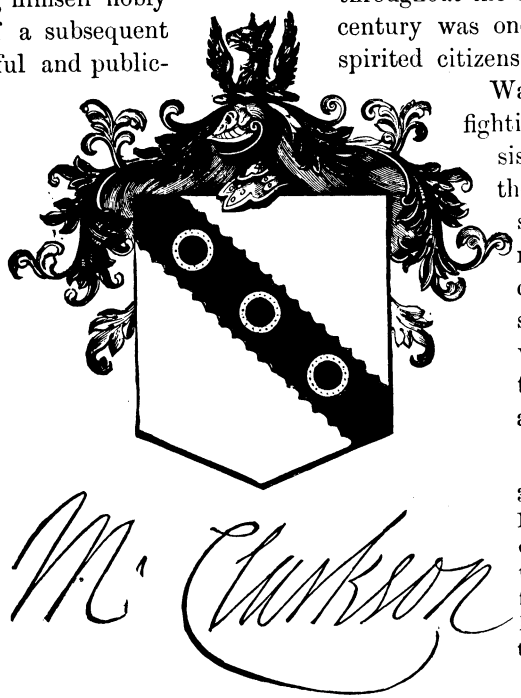
The situation was painful beyond language, embracing, as it did, all the horrors of civil warfare. Fathers, sons, and brothers were in a multitude of cases arrayed for battle against each other. The efforts of the British officers to enlist the Long-Islanders in their service was not without its effect in many districts, for with such a formidable fleet before their eyes, what promise could they see in resistance? But neither Lord nor General Howe had measured correctly the spirit of New York. They were to discover to their sorrow that the influential families were much more numerously represented in the "rebel" ranks than they had been led to expect. William Floyd wrote from Philadelphia to the Convention in great anxiety concerning the escape of his family from Long Island. He made earnest inquiries about relatives and personal friends: "What must they submit to? Despotism or destruction I fear is their fate." David Clarkson hastily quitted his summer residence in Flatbush, taking refuge in New Brunswick, New Jersey; his wife was accompanied by her widowed sister, Mrs. David Van Horne, and five handsome, well-bred young lady daughters. The Hessian soldiers entered, and amused themselves with plundering Clarkson's vacant home. They discovered his choice imported wines, and exhibited a royal drunken frolic on the back piazza and in the yards. This large dwelling was subsequently converted into a hospital by the enemy. A trusty slave, in the moment of danger, managed to secrete a large amount of silver plate and other family treasures, which were thereby preserved to later generations. Scarcely had Clarkson heard of the disasters attending the battle of Long Island, when the great fire destroyed his elegant city residence with all its contents, portraits and ancient relics, and he was reduced from the greatest affluence to comparative penury. He had still quite a number of houses in the city from which he might have derived a tolerable revenue, but his real estate was seized, and he was



General Matthew Clarkson.
[From a painting by Stuart, in possession of Matthew Clarkson.]

Hosted by Google

kept out of his income until the end of the war.[1] His two sons were in active service; David was captain of a company, under Colonel Josiah Smith, to which Matthew was attached as a volunteer, and met the British on the 27th in the memorable battle of Long Island. Matthew (afterwards General) was a youth of brilliant parts, handsome, engaging, and of great strength and beauty of character.[2] He was shortly promoted, acquitting himself nobly throughout the struggle, and for nearly half a subsequent century was one of New York's most useful and public-spirited citizens.



ARMS AND SIGNATURE COPIED FROM A CONVEYANCE EXECUTED BY MATTHEW CLARKSON, FEBRUARY 18 1701.

Washington's deficiency in fighting material at this crisis was only equaled by the lack of military counsel upon which he could rely. Few of his officers were known to have superior capacity for war; the majority of them were untrained, and some were without

[1] See (Vol. II.) pages 34, 35, 36. Mr. Clarkson remained at New Brunswick until the spring of 1777, when, through the intervention of some of his old friends who had espoused the Royal cause, he was permitted to return to his house in Flatbush, leaving his "chariot, four-wheeled chaise, chair, and sulky" on the Raritan. Mr. Nicholas Couwenhoven welcomed him home by a kind note of congratulation, and not only offered his wagon and horses to help him with his family to his seat in Flatbush, but extended hospitalities to them all until they should be better provided for. The Van Hornes returned with the Clarksons, and, although avowed Whigs, were treated with great respect by the British officers. — *The Clarksons of New York*, Vol. I. 251 – 258. The coat of arms and autograph illustrated in the sketch were those of Secretary Matthew Clarkson, the first of the name in New York.

[2] Smith's company was the first to cross the river on the retreat, and Matthew Clarkson slept the following night in the deserted house of his aunt, Mrs. Van Horne, in Wall Street. He shortly joined the family at New Brunswick. From here he went to the house belonging to his father in Percepany, occupied during the summer by Governor William Livingston (whose wife was the sister of young Clarkson's mother and Mrs. Van Horne), where he met and made the personal acquaintance of General Greene, who recommended him to Washington, by whom he was appointed aide-de-camp to General Benedict Arnold.

Hosted by Google

aptitude for the service. Greene was stationed at Brooklyn, and engaged in throwing up works with remarkable vigor and rapidity; but he was scarcely thirty-four, without experience, except in theory and such as he had acquired at the head of his Rhode-Islanders at Bunker Hill, and his military judgment was crude. Mifflin was about the same age, of highly animated appearance, full of activity and apparently of fire, but too much of a bustler, harassing his men unnecessarily. Knox, the artillery colonel, although brave as a lion, or any braver thing, was only twenty-six, and fresh from a Boston bookstore. Reed was thirty-five, and invaluable from many points of view, but no veteran in the management of battles. Heath was one year under forty, and while a born organizer, ever on the alert, breathing the very spirit of control, and possessing a well-balanced mind, his qualifications for the field remained to be proven. Scott was older, and commanded an effective brigade of New-Yorkers, intent upon defending their capital to the last drop of their blood, but he was more valorous than discreet, and violently headstrong under excitement. Spencer, born on the shore of the Connecticut (at East Haddam) was sixty-two, one of the oldest of the major-generals, with experience in the French war, but he stood higher in the esteem and good-will than in the confidence of Washington, for his wisdom in great emergencies had not yet been tested. Parsons, the Lyme lawyer, with less knowledge of the practical application of the theories of war, and younger by twenty-three years, was much the greater military genius; he divided with the untiring Wadsworth the honor of commanding the flower of the Connecticut soldiery, but his tactics and generalship were yet to be learned and appreciated. Wolcott, a statesman of fifty ripe years, who had served the Crown manfully during the struggle with France, and whose capacious mind might have helped in grappling the problem had he been present in season, came through the scorching heat and dust at the last moment, leading the several regiments hurriedly raised by Governor Trumbull to assist in the city's defense. Stirling was also fifty, of fine presence and the most martial appearance of any general in the army save Washington himself, was quick-witted, intelligent, far-seeing, and vociferous among his troops; he had had, moreover, considerable military schooling, but his special forte, so far as developed, lay rather in enginery and the planning of fortifications than in the conduct of great battles. Nixon, of about the same age, had served at the capture of Louisburg, and for years subsequent to that event, fighting at Ticonderoga when Abercrombie was defeated, and in the battle of Lake George; he was wounded at Bunker Hill, from the effects of which he was still suffering, and although commanding a brigade his endurance of any protracted hardship was not

Hosted by Google

assured. Sullivan, a lawyer of thirty-six, who through the fearless execution of certain important trusts won the good opinion of Congress and was appointed major-general with enthusiasm, had just returned from an expedition to the northern frontiers, when Greene was prostrated by the fever, whose place he was deputed at once to fill; but, although faithful and brave in the superlative degree, he was imperfectly acquainted with the geography of the region, had no time to study the details of the situation, and was personally a stranger to the troops under his new command. And Putnam, who succeeded Sullivan four days later, with the advantage of experience in arms together with twenty more years of life, and possessing all the elements of character except caution most needed to engage an enemy, was indifferent to strategy, and had little actual familiarity with the destined scene of action.

The majority of the subordinate officers were young men. Of those afterward best known to fame, Hamilton was nineteen, Aaron Burr twenty, Nicholas Fish, Scott's brigade-major, eighteen, Aaron Ogden twenty, and Samuel B. Webb twenty-three; while those who occupied posts of extreme danger and responsibility (other than already mentioned) were no patriarchs — McDougall had but just rounded his forty-fifth year, the two Clintons, guarding the Hudson approaches, were respectively forty and thirty-seven, and Van Cortlandt and the intrepid Varnum were neither above twenty-seven.

Fellows was stationed on the Hudson, between Greenwich and Canal Street. His brigade-major, Mark Hopkins (grandfather of the distinguished divine of the same name, late President of Williams College), roused him from slumber on the rainy Sunday morning of the
Aug. 18. 18th, by announcing that the *Phœnix* and the *Rose* were coming down the river under full sail before a strong northeast wind. The commanders, it seems, had enjoyed very little peace at their anchorage in Tappan Sea, their last annoyance having been a night attack by two fire-ships, one of which had grappled the *Phœnix* and been shaken off with difficulty, the other striking and burning one of the tenders. To the surprise of Putnam, they passed his sunken vessels opposite Fort Washington without being tripped as he predicted, and rounded the Battery unharmed by the guns along the shores. They cannonaded the city as they proceeded, injuring many houses; one nine-pounder entered a dwelling opposite the old Lutheran Church on Broadway, dancing through the sleeping apartments of the family without hurting any one; and several much larger balls tore down chimneys, and dropped in back yards and gardens with stirring effect. It was fortunately an hour when few people were in the streets, and there was little if any

Hosted by Google

loss of life. Divine service was attended in but one of the city churches on that memorable Sabbath — the Moravian, on Fulton Street opposite the North Dutch Church.

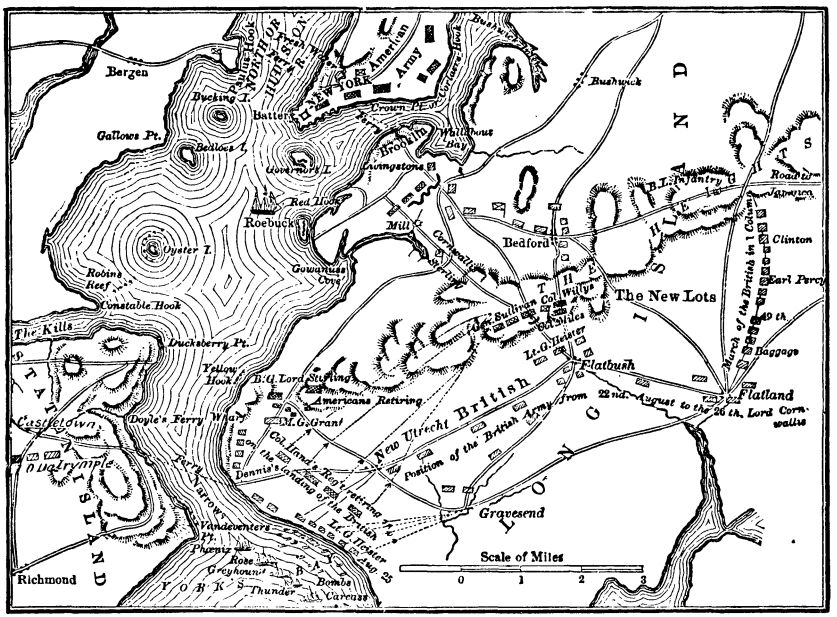
New York was in extreme agitation. What was to prevent the British fleet from running up the Hudson and landing in the rear of the town? All manner of rumors were rife. Persons suspected of favoring the enemy were treated with the utmost rigor. Notwithstanding the vigilance exercised, farmers from Queen's County were carrying boat-loads of provisions at the risk of their lives to the royal army, and furnishing all the knowledge necessary for the conduct of the campaign. The Tories who had been disarmed the preceding winter were hiding in swamps, holes, hollow trees, and cornfields, or cruising in small boats on the Sound, landing and sleeping in the woods at night, and taking to the water again in the morning. John Harris Cruger, one of Tyron's counselors, whose wife was a daughter of Oliver De Lancey, was concealed for three weeks upon a mow in a farmer's barn. Theophylact Bache, fifth president of the Chamber of Commerce, in attempting to preserve neutrality, found himself not only an object of suspicion, but in a most delicate position. His only brother, Richard, had married the daughter of Franklin, and was strong in sympathy with the Revolutionists. On the other hand, his wife's sister was married to Major Moncrieff, an officer in the king's service.[1] Mrs. Moncrieff was ill at his house in Flatbush, and a letter addressed to her husband without signature was intercepted and accredited to Bache. He was summoned before the Committee, and, instead of obeying, wrote protesting that he had disregarded no order of Congress, Continental or Provincial, nor was it his intention, but the distress of Mrs. Bache and his numerous family, occasioned by the arrival of the fleet, necessitated his exertions to "save them from the horrible calamities of the approaching conflict." Presently he was warned that a band of "Tory-hunters" were on their way to capture him, and escaped in the night in company with his brother-in-law, Augustus Van Cortlandt. They had serious adventures: Van Cortlandt was concealed in a cow-house for ten days, the conscientious Dutch farmer walking backwards when he carried him his meals, in order to be able to swear that he had not seen him. Both gentlemen at last reached the British lines on Staten Island in safety.

On Wednesday a thunder-storm of unparalleled severity hung over the city from seven to ten in the evening; four men, three of whom were army officers, were killed by lightning, and several others Aug. 21.

[1] See Vol. I. 760 (genealogical reference in note); Augustus Van Cortlandt was of the Yonkers branch of the Van Cortlandts, the son of Frederick Van Cortlandt and Frances Jay, and thus the first cousin of John Jay. See Vol. I. 606, 607, note.

Hosted by Google

injured; numerous buildings and trees, and one vessel at the dock, were struck, the thunder roaring in a continuous peal for hours. In the midst of the tempest the ever-watchful William Livingston upon the Jersey shore, having sent a spy into the enemy's camp on Staten Island at midnight the day before, despatched by messenger a letter written in all haste to Washington with the intelligence that twenty thousand troops had embarked for a movement upon New York. A copy of the communication was at once forwarded to the Convention at White Plains.



Sketch of Battle-Ground.

Aug. 22. The next morning the booming of cannon was heard, and columns of smoke were descried arising from the direction of Gravesend, Long Island. Three frigates, *Phœnix, Rose,* and *Greyhound,* had taken their stations as covering-ships for the landing, and before noon the roads and plains in and about Gravesend and New Utrecht were thronged with scarlet uniforms and glittering with burnished steel. Colonel Hand,[1]

[1] Edward Hand was a native of Clyduff, King's County, Ireland; he settled in Pennsylvania in 1774, intending to practice his profession, — that of a surgeon. He joined the army at the outset of the Revolution, and remained in service until the close of the war. In 1777 he was made a brigadier-general. He was thirty-two years of age at the time of the battle of Long Island, of fine martial figure, and distinguished among the officers for his noble horsemanship. After the war he held offices of civil trust, was a member of the Congress of 1784–85, and his name is affixed to the Pennsylvania constitution of 1790.

Hosted by Google

stationed upon heights near what is now Fort Hamilton, watched the scene with interest, and fell back with his command, driving before him what cattle he could, and setting fire to haystacks and provender along the route, taking position finally upon a hill commanding the central road leading from Flatbush to Brooklyn. Regiment after regiment crossed over from New York to meet the foe. Sullivan was on the wing, and threw out detachments in various directions to guard the passes through the natural depressions of the woody ridge of hills, of which there were four within six miles from the harbor. Lord Cornwallis advanced rapidly to seize the central pass; but, finding Hand and his riflemen ready for a vigorous defense, took post for the night in the village of Flatbush.

The Convention at White Plains was summoned that afternoon at a somewhat unusual hour by "the ringing of the bell." Livingston's letter to Washington had arrived, and was presented by John Sloss Hobart, who informed the gentlemen that the landing had already been effected. Information from Livingston that the British army "had eaten up all the cattle on Staten Island, and were now killing and barreling the country horses for food," induced the Convention to resolve upon a plan to hinder meat supplies; Woodhull, the president, was in control of the militia of Long Island, and was at once directed to proceed with a troop of horse to points eastward of the British encampment, and remove or kill stock, burn barns, and destroy mills, as the urgency of the case might demand, and as far as practicable prevent foraging incursions. He was to depend for his force chiefly upon the militia of Suffolk and Queen's counties; although Washington was requested to order Smith's and Remsen's regiments to his assistance. But these regiments were unable to reach him, as the sequel proved.

For some reason unaccountable to the Americans the British did not push forward on the 23d as anticipated. General Howe issued a proclamation to the people of Long Island offering protection and favor if they would drop their rebellious arms, presumably forced upon them by their leaders, and was surprised at the limited number who responded. On the 24th this great military host, one of the finest and best officered ever sent out of Great Britain, remained apparently idle, stretched along the country on the flats beyond the chain of wooded hills. Hand with his riflemen still guarded the chief Central Pass, having thrown up a redoubt; and detachments numbering in all some twenty-five hundred were scattered along the thicket for full six miles — distant from the lines at Brooklyn from one and a half to three miles. Washington was astonished and chagrined at the unmilitary and irregular proceedings of his

Aug. 24.

Hosted by Google

troops in a multitude of instances, which he discovered on his visit of inspection during the day on Saturday. Detachments skirmished with the vanguard of the enemy without orders and with little method, and others, scarcely better than marauding parties, robbed dwellings, barns, and hen-roosts, and burned the houses of friend and foe alike. He issued severe orders for the suppression of such lawless conduct, and sent Putnam to supersede Sullivan, as better able, in his judgment, to harmonize the diverse elements of which the army was composed. And to Sullivan, with Stirling as his second, was assigned the command of the troops outside the lines.

These lines, extending for about a mile and a half, were defended by ditches and felled trees, the counterscarp and parapet fraised with sharpened stakes. Sunday the 25th and Monday the 26th were busy, anxious, watchful days for the American generals, and the troops were continually at their alarm-posts. Howe had miscalculated the opposing force, and believed he was to contend with at least forty thousand; hence his plan of attack was elaborate. Had he known what is now so clear to posterity, that not over seven thousand men fit for duty were in the American camp on the evening of the 26th (the numbers were swollen by the regiments ordered over from New York on the following day), he might have exercised less caution with greater success. His own complete force, including officers, was twenty-one thousand, outnumbering the Americans three to one.[1]

About two o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, Hand and his riflemen, who had been on almost constant duty for six entire days, were relieved,
Aug. 27. and, returning to the lines, dropped upon the wet ground to sleep. Even now the army of King George was in motion. The advance was by three distinct columns. It was arranged that a squadron of five ships under Sir Peter Parker should divert attention by menacing the city of New York in the early morning. Meanwhile Major-General Grant, moving along the coast road near the Narrows, was to feign an attack upon the Americans in that quarter, and De Heister with his Hessians, was to force the Central Flatbush Pass at a given signal; the third division,

[1] Authorities consulted in writing this brief description of the Battle of Long Island include, *Bancroft's History of the United States; Stiles's History of the City of Brooklyn; Jones's History of New York during the Revolutionary War; Johnson's Campaign of 1776 around New York and Brooklyn; Thompson's History of Long Island; Irving's Life of Washington; Moore's Diary of the American Revolution; Sparks's Life of Washington; Morse's Revolution; Lord Mahon's History of England; Nash's Journal; Heath's Memoirs; Journals of the New York Convention; New York Revolutionary Papers; New York in the American Revolution; Force; Gordon; Dunlap;* together with biographical sketches, private letters, and documents too numerous to cite.

Hosted by Google

really the main body, — a column ten thousand strong, — comprising the choicest battalions, and led by Sir Henry Clinton, Lord Percy, and Lord Cornwallis, and accompanied by General Howe himself, made a long détour of nine miles in the dead of night, guided by farmers of the region, to the Jamaica Pass. The intention was to interpose itself between the wooded hills and the lines before an alarm could be sounded, thereby cutting off the retreat of the scattering detachments. Tents were left standing and camp-fires burning, to deceive the American guards in the heights above. The march was conducted in strict silence, and the great hostile body as it moved along in the darkness irresistibly swept into its grasp every human being within its reach who might perchance give information. The first glimpses of early dawn were not yet perceivable, when, removing fences and taking a short cut across the fields, the column halted in the open lots in front of Howard's tavern, now standing at the intersection of Broadway and the Jamaica turnpike, a little to the southeast of the winding defile, which was guarded only by a mounted patrol of five officers.[1] These guards were on the Jamaica road a little below, listening for signs and sounds of the enemy (never dreaming it could slip across lots so quietly) and were almost immediately discovered and captured; thus was the only obstacle on the Jamaica route through the Pass removed. The innkeeper and his son were compelled to guide the British around to the road as soon as it was found to be unguarded. About nine o'clock De Heister, who had been firing random guns without stirring from his post, to the great perplexity of Sullivan as he moved along the ridge with four hundred of his men inspecting the situation, heard two heavy signal guns and knew that Howe and his ten thousand had gained the rear of the Americans. He at once ordered Donop to carry the Pass, and the Hessians swarmed up from the Flatbush plains with drums beating and colors flying. The troops in the hills were apprised of the trap which had been sprung upon them by the same fiery mouthpiece. They were wedged in with walls of steel and fire on both sides. Retreat was the only alternative. But how? At the redoubt in the Central Pass there was little opposition, and it was quickly occupied by the exultant Hessians. The riflemen had turned to engage the British, who were advancing with fixed bayonets, and fought with unparalleled bravery, but were thrown back upon the Hessians. Miles, Wyllys, Cornell, and other officers, with their little handfuls of men at different points (numbering, all told, less than two thousand), made herculean effort to reach roads that were the only possible avenue

[1] Gerrit Van Wagenen, Jeronimus Hoogland, Robert Troup, Edward Dunscomb, and Lieutenant Gilliland.

Hosted by Google

to the lines, running in squads and fighting as they ran along the rough slopes; but the road they sought, when reached, was a scarlet mass of warriors, by whom they were hurled back, like their comrades, upon the Hessians. The scene was too terrible for description. If we may credit the enemy's account of the struggle, the Hessians had been purposely told that the rebels had resolved to give no quarter — to them in particular; thus they bayoneted without discretion. The fury upon both sides was extreme. The enemy were amazed at the valor of men struggling against such overwhelming numbers. For two hours the hills echoed with shouts and cries. Some succeeded in cutting their way through and reaching the lines, others fell or were captured; among the latter, after fighting with great heroism, was Sullivan himself.

A little before noon another signal-gun conveyed to Grant in the coast road — his line reaching into the Greenwood hills — the intelligence that Cornwallis had reached ground in the rear of Stirling and Parsons, with whom Grant had been playing an artillery duel ever since he drove in the pickets at early dawn. Stirling, ordered by Sullivan to check the progress of the enemy in that direction, had made a stand on the ridge about the site of what is now Twentieth Street, his force not exceeding sixteen hundred. Grant was seven thousand strong, including two companies of New York loyalists. Parsons, with Atlee's and Huntington's regiments, embracing some three hundred men, was detailed by Stirling to prevent the enemy from overlapping him on the left, and fought upon a hill further on between which and himself there was a great unprotected gap. Stirling was unaware of the web that was being spun and the scenes transpiring elsewhere; with his men formed in battle array he had for four hours maintained an invincible front against the perpetual fire of Grant, who, in obeying orders, made only threatening forward movements until notified that the flanking columns were masters of the inner field. No message came to Stirling of Sullivan's defeat. No relief, or orders for withdrawal, reached him from headquarters, the British having intervened in such numbers as to render communication impossible.

Now with one simultaneous rush the devoted party were attacked on three sides, and Stirling's eyes were quickly opened to the fact that he was nearly surrounded by a vastly superior force. The Gowanus marsh and creek, here at its widest, separated him from the only way of retreat to the lines, the roads being all occupied by the enemy. With soldierly self-possession he ordered the main part of his command to attempt the perilous crossing as best they could; and to protect the men while they forded or swam the waters which the rising tide was rendering every moment less and less passable, he placed himself at the head of

Hosted by Google

about three hundred gallant Marylanders and dashed upon Cornwallis, who was posted in the old Cortelyou house. The attack was so spirited that they drove the advanced guard back upon the house and held the position for some minutes, then withdrew beyond a bend in the road; but only to gather strength for a renewed attack. Again and again this heroic band rallied about their general and returned to the encounter; they charged upon the house, once driving the gunners from and seizing their pieces within its shadow, and seemed on the very point of dislodging Cornwallis, but with prudence equal to their courage retired swiftly as fresh troops came running in great numbers to his aid. Furthermore, Stirling saw that his main object was accomplished. The rest of his command were on the safe side of the creek, conducting twenty-three prisoners to the lines and holding up proudly the wet and tattered colors of Smallwood's regiment, under the protection of Smallwood himself, who had come out to meet them and prevent pursuit. A few had been drowned in wading and swimming the angry waters, but the number did not exceed eight, two of whom were Hessian prisoners. Stirling had sacrificed himself and party for the good of the whole, with less loss of life than tradition records, although scores of brave men fell in the terrible charge of the three hundred. With the survivors Stirling fled into the hills, but nearly all were captured; he eluded pursuit until he could reach the Hessian corps, where he surrendered his sword to De Heister.

Parsons, meanwhile, was surprised to discover that the line whose flank he had been protecting for hours was no longer there. Stirling had not informed him of his sudden action, as no messenger could pass the gap under such a fire. Thus he must retreat without orders, but Cornwallis had complete command of the road. In short, he was hemmed in on every side. He turned into the woods, and some of his men escaped; but the greater part, including Atlee, were captured. He hid in a swamp, and with seven men made his way into the American lines at daylight next morning.

The ships of the British line which were intended to menace New York during this attack were baffled by a strong headwind. Only one vessel, the *Roebuck*, was able to reach a point where it could play upon the fort at Red Hook. Washington had remained in New York until satisfied there could be no immediate attack upon the city, then hastened to the lines in Brooklyn, and was just in time to witness, with anguish, the disasters the reader has already learned. Before two o'clock in the afternoon the battle was over. The British were in possession of the outer line of defense, and the Americans were within the fortified camp on the Brooklyn peninsula.

Hosted by Google

The victory shed little glory on British arms. Both England and America were astonished that Howe, with an army of such proportions and by dint of an apparently overwhelming manœuvre, had not totally annihilated the scattering outposts! The Americans were seldom engaged less than five to one, and were compelled to fight in front and rear under every disadvantage. Considering the circumstances, they behaved admirably along the whole five miles. Had they been military experts, they would doubtless have surrendered without contesting the ground inch by inch, since nothing was to be gained by such a sacrifice. The struggle, however, taught a lesson to the foe which greatly influenced coming events. The loss of the Americans was, all told — killed, wounded, and prisoners — about one thousand, of whom three fourths were prisoners.[1] Howe reported three hundred and sixty-seven dead. Thus were more even of the British than Americans slain. Of American officers killed were, Caleb Parry from Pennsylvania, of Stirling's command, a gentleman of polish and culture, descended from an ancient and honorable family long seated in North Wales; Philip Johnston, son of Judge Samuel Johnston of New Jersey, a gentleman of education, an officer of fine presence, and one of the strongest men in the army, who fell, near Sullivan, while leading his men to the charge; Joseph Jewett of Lyme, Connecticut, an officer much beloved, "of elegant and commanding appearance, and of unquestionable bravery"; and Harmanus Rutgers from New York, of the ancient and well-known Rutgers family, whose seat was upon the East River near Jones Hill.

Howe's generals, Clinton, Cornwallis, and Vaughan, are said to have pressed for leave to storm at once the fortifications, but he shook his head, saying, "Enough has been done for one day." His troops proceeded to dine, after which they spread their tents scarcely a mile from the Americans, their sentries stationed one fourth of a mile away. Towards evening a storm of wind and rain sprung up from the northeast. There was little or no sleep in the American camp. They had no tents, no fires, nor any opportunity for cooking, and the men working in the trenches were up to their waists in water. The next day there was some firing between the two camps, but heavy rains kept the enemy chiefly under temporary shelter. However Howe was intending to carry the lines, whether by assault or direct approach, he was manifestly favored.

Aug. 28.

[1] This statement seems to be absolutely correct. It was Washington's original estimate, made from the list of names handed in by the commander of each regiment engaged in the fight; many of these lists are preserved (*Force*, Fifth Series, Vol. III.), and by comparison with other official reports prove the facts, notwithstanding the widely different account given by Howe, and accepted by various historians.

Hosted by Google

In the rear of the Americans was a river half a mile broad swept by swift tides. He could, when the wind changed, easily encircle them by a fleet, thereby cutting off all connection with New York.

On the morning of the 29th the rain was still pouring in torrents. Neither Washington nor his generals had taken rest since the
Aug. 29. battle. Should the enemy succeed in penetrating the lines, or the fleet in commanding the crossing, they were lost. Hence was planned and executed the famous retreat from Long Island, one of the most remarkable military events in history.

As soon as it was resolved to withdraw the troops, boats and every species of water-craft, large and small, upon both sides of Manhattan Island to the Harlem River, were impressed into service for the coming night, with the utmost despatch and secrecy. These were placed under the management of John Glover, who commanded a regiment of Marblehead fishermen, the best mariners in the world. To prepare the army for a general movement without betraying its purpose, orders were issued for each regiment to parade with accoutrements at seven o'clock in front of their encampments, ready to march at a moment's notice; the impression was given that many of them were to be relieved by battalions from Mercer's New Jersey command, and other changes made, while some inferred that a night attack upon the enemy was contemplated and hastened to make nuncupative wills. During the afternoon such heavy rain fell as could hardly be remembered. Washington's anxiety and unceasing vigilance kept him continually in the saddle, drenched and dripping, without having closed his eyes in sleep for forty-eight or more hours. Mifflin was assigned to the command of the rear-guard, — chosen men from Hand's, Smallwood's, Haslet's, Shee's, Magaw's, and Chester's regiments, who were to remain nearest the enemy to the last. The withdrawal commenced with the first deep darkness of the cloudy evening. As one regiment moved in silence towards Fulton Ferry, another was changed quietly to fill the gap. They tramped through the "mud and mire" with their luggage — guns, ammunition, provisions, "pots and kettles" — upon their shoulders, the artillery men dragging cannon, and carts and horses and cattle being pushed along with as much celerity as the soft condition of the well-soaked soil would allow. There were some vexatious delays; and in the midst of the hushed hurry, in the dead of night, a cannon went off (cause unknown) with tremendous roar, startling the Americans, but failing to alarm the British. A serious blunder in conveying a verbal message also created a whirlwind of excitement among an interested few for a brief time. Washington, standing on the ferry stairs about two o'clock in the morning, sent Alexander Scammel, Sullivan's brigade-major, now

Hosted by Google

serving as aid to the commander-in-chief (who had been a law student of Sullivan's before the breaking out of the war), to hurry forward the troops already on the march. Misunderstanding orders, he started Mifflin with his entire command for the ferry, where all was in confusion owing to the turning of the tide and the inability of the sail-boats to make headway. Washington met the party, and in terms indicative of acute distress expressed his fear that the mistake had ruined the whole scheme. Mifflin and party promptly faced about and reoccupied the lines which had been completely vacated for an hour, without discovery by the enemy. It was daylight when they were finally summoned to the ferry, but a friendly fog came up, so dense that a man could scarcely be discerned six yards away; thus they marched without detection, leaving their camp-fires smoking. Washington refused to step into his barge until the entire force had embarked. At seven in the morning
Aug. 30. Howe learned to his chagrin that an army of nine thousand troops, with all their munitions of war, had successfully retired from a position in front of his victorious legions so near that ordinary sounds could be distinctly heard! However he may have surprised the Americans by his night manœuvre of the 27th, he was now as much more surprised as the movement of Washington was conducted with greater military skill.

Yet it was a retreat. And there were plenty of people to murmur and complain. Disappointment makes men captious. Why was the Jamaica Pass left unguarded? Why did Washington go to Brooklyn at all? Who was responsible for the surprise and defeat?

Neither was General Howe applauded by England for his apparent conquest. Why did he not run up the Hudson and land in the rear of the rebels, instead of wasting so much time on Long Island? And when he was engaging the rebels on the 27th, why did not Lord Howe move with his fleet into the East River, and thereby end the war?

For the next two days New York presented a cheerless picture. Wet clothes and camp equipage were strewed along the sidewalks in front of the houses or stretched in yards to dry. Squads of weary-looking soldiers were moving to and fro, but not a sound of drum or fife was heard. Men were going home in groups and companies. They were farmers chiefly, who had left their grain half cut in the fields, and were present on short enlistments. Their example was disheartening and contagious.

The same opinion prevailed throughout the American army as in the British councils, that there was now little or nothing to prevent Howe from landing and extending his lines from river to river across Manhattan Island, thereby cooping up the patriots, without means of exit even by the sea. The loss of three prominent generals, Sullivan, Stirling, and Wood-

Hosted by Google

hull, was depressing in the extreme. The two former were prisoners in the British camp. They were treated with respect, dining daily with the two brothers, Lord and General Howe. Woodhull had been captured on the evening of the 28th at Carpenter's tavern, near Jamaica, where he had taken refuge from a thunder-storm. He had written to the Convention on the same morning that his men (less than one hundred) and horses were worn out with fatigue, that Smith and Remson could not join him, communication being cut off by the enemy, and that he must retire unless he had assistance; concluding his letter with the remark, "I hope the Convention does not expect me to make brick without straw." He was surprised by a party of several hundred of the enemy sent out in pursuit of him, and surrendered his sword; after which he attempted to escape over a board fence in the darkness, but was discovered by the sentries and severely wounded through blows inflicted upon his head and arms with a cutlass and bayonet, from which injuries he died three weeks later.[1] He was allowed to send for his wife, at the same time requesting her to bring with her all the money in her possession and all that she could procure, which he distributed among the American prisoners to alleviate their sufferings — the last generous act of his useful and honored life.

Washington attempted to restore order and confidence by reorganizing the army. It was obvious that the city was untenable. The enemy were strengthening the works on Brooklyn Heights. Their heavy vessels were anchored near Governor's Island, within easy gunshot of the city, the American garrison at that point and at Red Hook having been safely withdrawn the night after the battle.[2] They were also throwing

[1] *Jones's History of New York during the Revolutionary War*, Vol. II. 332; *Notes to Jones's History* by Edward F. De Lancey, with contemporary documents, etc., Vol. II. 592-612. A careful examination of the various statements concerning the capture, injuries, and death of General Woodhull leads to the opinion expressed in the text. Oliver De Lancey, Jr., was an officer of the 17th Light Dragoons, the capturing party, and has by a succession of writers been charged with inflicting the wounds from which Woodhull died. It is claimed by his family that he always indignantly denied the accusation. Thompson and others write that he came up in time to save Woodhull from instant death. Judge Thomas Jones, author of the recently published history which throws new light upon these incidents, was a contemporary writer, lived on Long Island, his sister was the wife of Richard Floyd, first cousin of Mrs. Woodhull, and the two ladies were warm friends before and after the general's death; thus he had every opportunity of knowing the circumstances. He was a judge of the Supreme Court of New York, as indeed had been his father before him, and the head of the Jones family of Queen's County; his wife was Anne, daughter of Lieutenant-Governor James De Lancey — sister of Mrs. William Walton — and first cousin of the Oliver De Lancey mentioned.

[2] Jones, censuring the English generals, writes: "In the evening of the same day (unaccountable as it is) a detachment of the rebel army went from New York with a number of boats and carried off the troops, the stores, artillery and provisions without the least interruption whatever, though General Howe's whole army lay within a mile of the place, and his brother, the Admiral, with his fleet, covered the bay at a little distance below the island."

Hosted by Google

up fortifications on the Long Island shore at intervals as far as the mouth of the Harlem River. On the 2d of September, just at evening, a forty-gun man-of-war swept between Governor's Island and Long Island, past the batteries on the East River, which might as well have fired at the moon for all the harm they could do her, and anchored in Turtle Bay, near the foot of what is now Forty-seventh Street. Through the skillful attack of a detachment of Washington's artillery the ship was compelled to change her position to the shelter of Blackwell's Island. Several war vessels suddenly made their début in the Sound, having gone round Long Island. Visions of red-hot bullets and showers of shells in the streets of New York dismayed even the brave. Resistance would be impossible should the enemy come upon the city from the North, with men-of-war encircling the Battery.

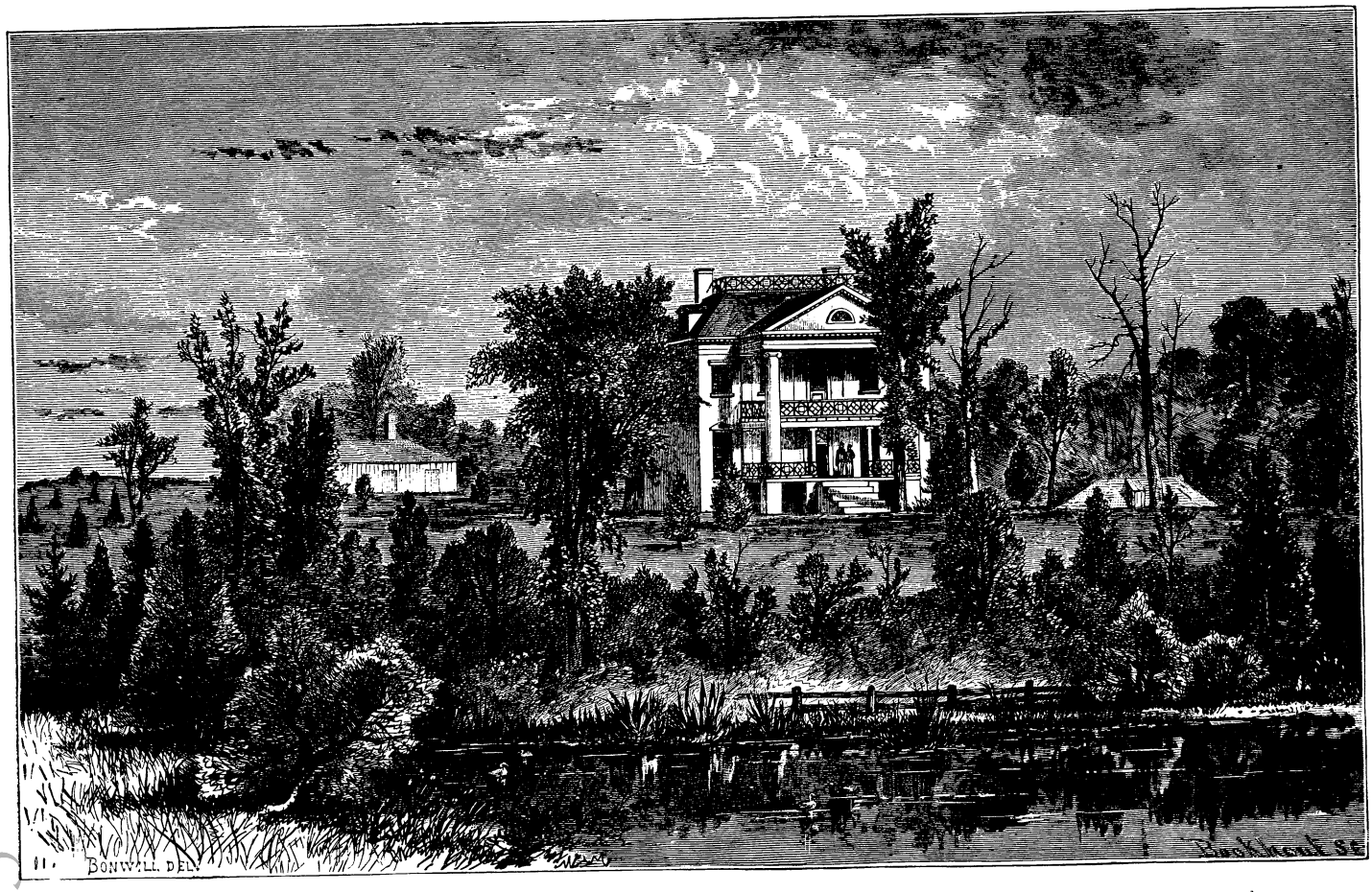
Sept. 2.

A situation more delicate and full of risk could hardly be imagined. The evacuation and burning of New York was discussed freely as a matter of military policy. Washington submitted to Congress the question "If we are obliged to abandon the town, shall it stand as winter-quarters for the enemy?" on the very day that the British war vessel made her successful trip up the East River. Congress replied that "no damage should be done to the city of New York, as it could undoubtedly be recovered even should the enemy obtain possession for a time." There was no cessation of exertion with the spade and pickaxe to render Manhattan Island a stronghold; and the army, disposed in three divisions, under Putnam, Spencer, and Heath, stretched its attenuated line from the Battery to Harlem and Kingsbridge, Putnam guarding the city proper and the East River approaches to Fifteenth Street. All military stores, however, not in actual immediate demand, were being quietly removed, as fast as conveyances could be procured, to a post partially fortified at Dobb's Ferry.

Days slipped by and the enemy made no further advance. They were fearful of precipitating the destruction of the richest city in America. And as Washington's appeal to Congress and its response were not borne on the wings of the wind, or in coaches propelled by steam, there was ample time for the expression of much diverse opinion among the military and civil authorities, before the sense of the supreme government was known. Putnam urged an immediate retreat from the city, as one portion of the army might at any moment be cut off before the other could support it, the extremities of the lines being sixteen miles apart. Mercer said, "We should keep New York, if possible, as the acquiring of it will give eclat to the arms of Great Britain, afford the soldiers good quarters, and furnish a safe harbor for their fleet." Greene, from his sick-bed, wrote:

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google



"On the 7th a Council of general officers met at Washington's head-quarters, at the **Richmond** *Hill House, to decide upon some general course to be adopted."* *Page 117.*

Hosted by Google

"Abandon, by all means, the city and island. They should not be put in competition with the general interests of America. There is no object to be obtained by holding any position below Kingsbridge. I would burn the city and suburbs to deprive the enemy of barracking their whole army together and of profiting by a general market." Scott was of the same mind, although the city contained his entire possessions. Reed wrote to his wife, on the 6th, "We are still here, in a posture somewhat awkward. We think (at least I do) that we cannot stay, and yet we do not know how to go, so that we may be properly said to be between hawk and buzzard." John Jay had long since advocated the burning of the city; and Wolcott quoted precedents where invading armies had been starved and ruined by the laying waste of the countries upon which they had built their hopes. Heath, Spencer, and George Clinton were unwilling that a place should be abandoned which had been fortified with such great cost and labor, and never wavered for a moment in their advice to hold the city.

On the 7th a council of general officers met at Washington's headquarters, at the Richmond Hill House, to decide upon some general course to be adopted. The majority voted for defense, believing that Congress wished the point to be maintained at every hazard. On the 10th Congress resolved to leave the occupation or abandonment of the city entirely at Washington's discretion. The next day Greene and six brigadiers petitioned Washington to call a council of war to reconsider the decision of the 7th. He did so on the 12th, when ten generals voted to evacuate, and three — Heath, Spencer, and George Clinton — to defend.

This was but one of innumerable instances in which George Clinton displayed his natural boldness of character and unflinching nerve. He was a man whose iron will never failed him in an emergency. He was called arbitrary and cruel. The cause may be traced to the school in which he found himself. He had no pity for those whom he regarded as open enemies, and he treated them with severity. And yet, personally, his heart was tender and kind. Henceforward, during the next twenty-six years, we shall find him a conspicuous figure in the annals of New York. He became the first governor after the organization of the State, and, in reference to those who would have guided the British on to victory, an avenging power. "Not one of the men on the American side in the Revolution," writes Edward Floyd De Lancey, "great and brilliant as many of them were, could ever have retained, as he did, the governorship of New York by successive elections for eighteen years." Mrs. George Clinton was a lady of Dutch parentage, well educated, and of exceptional strength and balance of character. She was about his own

Hosted by Google

age. Her father was a man of influence and fortune, prominent in the affairs of Kingston. Her brother, Christopher Tappan, was one of the trustees of Kingston and clerk of the corporation. The Tappan family were related to nearly all the people of importance in the vicinity of Kingston. Thus George Clinton's early political life began under favorable auspices, and his legal acumen and strong common-sense enabled



Governor George Clinton. Mrs. George Clinton.

[Fac-simile copy of miniature portraits executed when the governor was about forty years of age, in possession of his granddaughter, Mrs. Cornelius Van Rensselaer.]

him to master many an after problem without wasting time in consultation. He said councils made men cowards. In adopting the surest and most certain means to attain his objects, he became the terror of all the adversaries of the Revolution, but even they rarely accused him of injustice, and never of revenge.[1]

While these events were transpiring in New York, Lord Howe was taxing his ingenuity to devise some method by which he could negotiate a peaceful adjustment of the strife. He had no disposition to destroy New

[1] See (Vol. II.) page 74. Charles Clinton, the father of George Clinton, removed to America in 1729, landing at Cape Cod; and in 1730 formed a permanent and flourishing settlement in Ulster County, New York, which he called Little Britain. He was of English descent; his grandfather was William Clinton, an officer in the army of Charles I., one of the members of the famous family of the Earls of Lincoln: after the dethronement of his monarch he went to France, thence to Spain, and to Scotland where he married a lady of the family of Kennedy; after which he took up his abode in Ireland; his only son, James, while in England to recover the patrimonial estate married the daughter of an army officer. Charles Clinton, the son of James, born 1690, married Elizabeth, daughter of Alexander Denniston. He was a man of education and property, built a substantial home in Little Britain, possessed a well-selected library, became a surveyor of note, a judge of Common Pleas for the County of Ulster, and colonel of the militia, doing good service with his regiment at the

Hosted by Google

York, nor to proceed harshly against a people whose independent notions he admired and honored. He was hampered by his instructions, unable to shape a message which would be accepted by Congress or by the commander-in-chief of its army; thus he took advantage of his prisoner, General Sullivan, sending him, on parole, with a verbal message explanatory of his wishes as well as lack of power to treat with Congress as a legal body, and earnestly requesting a conference with some of its members as private persons.

Sullivan reached Philadelphia September 2, and made known his errand. Congress was for a time divided in opinion. Hot debates occupied full three days, before Sullivan was on his return journey to the British camp, conveying an answer to this effect: "Congress cannot with propriety send any of its members in a private capacity to confer with Lord Howe; but, ever desirous for peace, they will send a committee of their body to learn whether he has any authority to treat with persons authorized by Congress for that purpose, and to hear such propositions as he may think fit to make." The committee chosen were Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge. Several letters were exchanged between Lord Howe and Dr. Franklin in relation to a place of meeting, which was fixed finally at the Old Billopp manor-house on Staten Island, opposite Perth Amboy.

It was then a two days' journey from Philadelphia to Amboy. The committee started on the 9th, John Adams on horseback, and Dr. Franklin and Rutledge in old-fashioned chairs. The taverns along the way were so full of soldiery en route for the defense of New York, that these dignitaries could hardly obtain admission. The second night they staid in New Brunswick, Franklin and Adams being obliged to share the same bed, in a little narrow chamber with one small window. Adams was an invalid, and afraid of the night air. "Don't shut the window," exclaimed Franklin, as he saw Adams with his hand on the sash, "we shall be suffocated." "I cannot run the risk of a cold," said Adams, bringing down the sash in an imperative manner. "But the air within the chamber

capture of Fort Frontenac. He was, in short, a man endowed with many talents, and of great dignity and respectability. He had seven children, but the two sons best known to fame were James, born 1736, and George, born 1739. James married first, Mary, daughter of Egbert De Witt; second, Mrs. Mary Gray. The third son of James Clinton and Mary DeWitt was the famous De Witt Clinton. George Clinton (first Governor of New York, and for eight years Vice-President of the United States) married, in 1769, Cornelia Tappan of Kingston, and their children were, Catherine, who married General Pierre Van Cortlandt, son of Lieutenant-Governor Pierre Van Cortlandt; Cornelia Tappan, who married Citizen Edmond Charles Genet; George, born in 1778, who married Anna, daughter of Hon. William Floyd; Elizabeth, who married Matthias B. Tallmadge; Martha W., who died young; Maria, who married Dr. Stephen Beekman. See page 151.

Hosted by Google

will soon be, and indeed is now, worse than that without doors. Come, open the window and come to bed, and I will convince you. I believe you are not acquainted with my theory of colds?" "I have read some of your letters, which are inconsistent with my experience," said Adams, opening the window, and leaping into bed, curious to hear an elucidation of what seemed to him a paradox. The philosopher commenced a lecture which lulled his audience into repose, and just as he was dwelling upon the amount of air per minute which the human body destroys by respiration and perspiration, and showing, by a train of subtle reasoning, that through the breathing of impure air we imbibe the real cause of colds, not from without but from within doors, he fell asleep himself. The next morning they reached the beautiful shore opposite Staten Island at an early hour. Lord Howe's barge was there to receive them, and a gentlemanly officer told them he was to remain subject to their orders, as hostage for their safe return. "This is childish," said Adams, turning to Franklin; "we want no such pledge." Franklin and Rutledge were of the same mind. They accordingly told the officer that if he held himself under their direction, he must go back to his superior with them in the barge, to which he bowed assent, and they all embarked. Howe walked toward the shore as the barges approached, and perceiving his officer with the committee, cried out: "Gentlemen, you make me a very high compliment, and you may depend upon it I will consider it the most sacred of things."

Sept. 11.

He shook hands warmly with Franklin, who introduced his companions, and they all moved towards the house, between the lines of soldiery which had been drawn up so as to form a lane, conversing pleasantly together. One of the largest apartments had been converted, with moss, vines, and branches, into a delightful bower, and here a collation of "good claret, good bread, cold ham, tongues, and mutton" was immediately served. After this Lord Howe opened the conference, expressing his attachment to America, and his gratitude for the honors bestowed upon his accomplished elder brother, who was killed at Lake George in the expedition against the French eighteen years before, declaring that "should America fall he should feel and lament it like the loss of a brother." Franklin bowed with graceful ease, and replied, smiling blandly, "My lord, we will use our utmost endeavors to spare you that mortification." Howe stated his position in flowing language, and asked the gentlemen if they were willing to lay aside their distinction as members of Congress, and converse as individuals upon the outline of a plan to stay the calamities of war. They assented; Adams exclaiming, with characteristic impetuosity, "Your lordship may consider *me* in what light you please. Indeed,

Hosted by Google

I should be willing to consider myself for a few moments in any character which would be agreeable to your lordship, *except that of a British subject*." The conversation was conducted as among friends for four hours. But it came to nothing, except so far as it strengthened the patriots. Howe was found to be wholly devoid of authority to treat with the colonies in their present condition. And the committee were only commissioned to obtain this knowledge. Neither party could make propositions or promises. They separated with the utmost show of courtesy, Howe saying, as he bade them adieu, "I am sorry, gentlemen, that you have had the trouble of coming so far to so little purpose."

To a man of Howe's temperament the situation at this moment must have been one of torture. He was sad and silent the remainder of the day. The next morning industry in every department of the British army indicated a speedy movement upon New York. While the committee were traveling through New Jersey dust slowly back to Philadelphia, discoursing at intervals upon the lack of discipline among the troops they encountered at the inns, New York was in a ferment. The news had already begun to fly from mouth to mouth that the city was to be evacuated. Horses, vehicles, and water-craft were employed in transferring military equipments and stores to Kingsbridge. It is said that nineteen twentieths of the inhabitants had already removed from the town, but there were still enough left to cause great embarrassment. Some would remain in any event, partly from want of means to remove, or a place of refuge, and partly from a sense of coming protection. But others hurriedly prepared to abandon their homes and go into exile. On the 13th four ships sailed past the American batteries, keeping up an incessant fire, and anchored in the East River. Six thousand of the British were already quartered upon the islands near the mouth of the Harlem River, and ere sunset of the 14th were joined by several thousand additional troops. An immediate landing at Harlem or Morrisania was predicted. Washington sprang into his saddle as soon as the messenger came with this last intelligence, and rode in hot haste to Harlem Heights.

Chroniclers of the times catalogued the events of these two or three days as they would an invoice of crockery: "Nothing remarkable happened; still getting ready to retreat." Like some portraits, the drawing is chiefly in outline without color or shading. Yet the British were changing position and nearing the shore on Long Island. Their guns and those of the ships in the East River were heard continually. Citizens and soldiers were running hither and yon with pale faces, performing their allotted duties with nervous energy. Carts were laden as fast as procured, and driven hurriedly to boats or over the long tedious roads to the

Hosted by Google

North. Effects were swiftly packed and households scattered. Forts were, as far as practicable, dismantled. Bells were removed from the churches and public buildings and secreted. Brass knockers were taken from the doors of the houses (by order of the Convention) weighed, valued, and registered, then deposited for safe-keeping in Newark, New Jersey. Several bodies of troops marched to the upper part of Manhattan. Washington took supper on Saturday night (the 14th) at the Apthorpe Mansion, where at a late hour the expedition of Nathan Hale into the enemy's camp for trustworthy information was planned.

Sept. 15. Sunday morning dawned upon a tired city. There had been no cessation of labor during the night. The removal of the sick and wounded, numbering several thousand, had consumed much time, and disheartening delays had resulted from the scarcity of proper conveyances. Yet everything thus far had been conducted with consummate method, and men unschooled in war had exhibited the self-control of veterans. With the rising of the sun a fresh source of alarm was visible. Three ships of war were sailing defiantly by the Battery into the Hudson River. Nash writes, "They fired smartly at the town." Rev. Mr. Shewkirk said one ball struck the North Church; and that it was "unsafe to walk the streets." It was not known where these ships would anchor, but they were presumably destined to meet the line upon the western shore which the British were about to throw across the island above the city. Of course there could be no further removal of army stores by water.

Two roads intersected Manhattan lengthwise; of which the "Old Boston Road" on the general line of Third Avenue, and bearing west of Fifth Avenue by a crooked way through McGowan's Pass, was the grand highway. The Bloomingdale road, a continuation of Broadway, leaned towards the Hudson after reaching Sixtieth Street, and wound along the picturesque region of hills and vales known by the beautiful descriptive name of Bloomingdale, past the Apthorpe Mansion, terminating as a legal highway at Adam Hoagland's house, about One Hundred and Fifteenth Street, — although it was continued through his estate as a farm-road to Manhattanville. It was connected with the old Boston or Kingsbridge road by a narrow public way from Hoagland's house, running nearly at right angles. These two chief thoroughfares were intersected at various points by local roads, private avenues to property, and farmer's lanes.

Attention was soon diverted from the ships in the North River to motions in the East River. Five men-of-war suddenly spread their wings and anchored within fifty yards of the American breastworks at

Hosted by Google

Kip's Bay (near Thirty-fourth Street) and commenced a well-directed and incessant cannonading to "scour the grounds" in that vicinity. The occupants of Kip's mansion took refuge in the cellar. Presently eighty-four flat-bottomed boats laden with troops in bright scarlet drifted into view from Newtown Creek, giving the broad bosom of the river the appearance of a clover-bed. This brilliant scene was watched by Scott and his New-Yorkers on the Stuyvesant estate near Fifteenth Street, and by Wadsworth and Selden with their forces at Twenty-third Street. Putnam's division was ordered to retreat at once from the lower town, but, although abandoning heavy cannon and a quantity of provision, were too seriously encumbered with families and baggage to move expeditiously, and would certainly be captured unless the landing could be delayed; hence Parsons and Fellows were sent with their brigades on a run to support Douglass with his few militia-men at Kip's Bay. They were just in time to see the first company of British troops from the flotilla ascend the slope, while thousands were ready to follow in their footsteps; and also to witness the flight of the soldiers who manned the works. This was hardly cowardice, although it has been so stigmatized by military officers and historical writers ever since that memorable morning. It was well known that the city was not to be defended. Had such a handful of troops opened fire upon the enemy it would have been a mere exhibition of foolhardiness, as useless as unjustifiable. Nothing was to be gained by it. Douglass gave the order to retreat, but not until it became impossible to remain in the works, which were acknowledged by all parties the least defensible of any along the whole East River shore. Obliged to cross an unprotected space "scoured by cannon-balls and grape-shot," the men dispersed, running swiftly toward the Old Boston or Post Road, the enemy firing and pursuing them.

Near Thirty-sixth Street and Fourth Avenue stood the residence of Robert Murray amid extensive grounds, — designated on the map as "Inclenberg." To the north of it a cross-road, nearly on the line of Forty-third Street, connected the Old Boston with the Bloomingdale road. A cornfield belonging to the Murray estate flourished on the site of the present Grand Central Depot, extending east to the junction of the roads, — the Old Boston Road here being about on the line of Lexington Avenue. At this point Washington on his four-mile gallop from the Apthorpe Mansion encountered the men in retreat from Kip's Bay. They were in dust and confusion, and in the hasty judgment of the moment "in disgrace." Here also came up the almost breathless recruits of Parsons and Fellows, who had scarcely halted in their run from Corlear's Hook, and who had been nearly headed off before they could spring

Hosted by Google

into the cornfield and through it reach the cross-road. The red foe surging over the bluff could be seen through the foliage already in possession of the highway. Washington in a frenzy of excitement rode up and down trying to rally the troops into line to check the advance of the British, in which he was gallantly aided by Parsons and other officers. But the attempt was fruitless. And having not a moment to lose he ordered the troops to continue their retreat, and spurred away to provide for the safety of Harlem Heights, as it was possible for the enemy to land in that vicinity at the same time as elsewhere.

Meanwhile Scott, Selden, and others on the East River below Kip's Bay saw the wisdom of immediate escape, since the British would naturally stretch across the island above them without delay. Scott reached Putnam's moving column on the Bloomingdale road with his command in safety; but Selden and party collided with a body of Hessians on their way to the city by the Boston road, near the corner of Twenty-third Street and Third Avenue, and after some sharp firing in which four Hessians were killed and eight wounded, he was made prisoner.[1]

[1] *Howe to Germain*, September 21, 1776. Colonel Samuel Selden was one of the substantial and accomplished men of his generation. Possessing a large estate on the banks of the Connecticut, a homestead of his own erection (in 1760) which, bearing the traces of good taste and the refined knowledge of how to live comfortably, is still standing, the father of thirteen children, and past fifty, with impaired health, he ignored all personal interests in devotion to the common cause, and accepted a colonelcy of Connecticut levies after — like Silliman, Douglass, and others — first advancing the funds to equip his regiment. He was the son of Samuel and Deborah Dudley Selden, and the grandson and great-grandson of the two Governors Dudley of Massachusetts, who it is well known were of the best blood of England. He was born January 11, 1723. After his capture he was conveyed to the City Hall in Wall Street and confined in the "Debtors' prison" on the upper floor. But, prostrated by the heat and exertions of the day, he was attacked with fever, from which he died on Friday, October 11. Some British officers, learning of his illness, caused him to be conveyed to more comfortable quarters in the "Old Provost," and he was attended by Dr. Thatcher, a British surgeon, receiving every possible kindness. He was buried in the Brick Church yard, where the building of the *New York Times* now stands, with more honors than were usually accorded to prisoners-of-war, whatever their rank; all the American officers who were prisoners at the time were indulged with liberty to attend his funeral. His wife was Elizabeth Ely, daughter of Richard Ely of Lyme. His son, Richard Ely Selden, born 1759, was the father of the wife of Henry Matson Waite, Chief Justice of Connecticut. Thus the present Chief Justice of the United States, Morrison R. Waite, is the great-grandson of Colonel Selden. And Mrs. Morrison R. Waite is a great-granddaughter of the same through her father Samuel Selden Warner, whose mother was the sixth daughter of Colonel Selden. Judge Samuel Lee Selden, Judge Henry R. Selden, Hon. Dudley Selden, Hon. Lyman Trumbull, General McDowell, and Professor Eaton of Yale, are among his descendants. President Eliphalet Nott of Union College, and Rev. Dr. Samuel Nott, were the sons of Colonel Selden's sister Deborah, who married Stephen Nott about 1752. Rev. Dr. Eliphalet Nott Potter, now President of Union College, Rev. Dr. Henry C. Potter, Rector of Grace Church, Hon. Clarkson Nott Potter, and Howard Potter are grandsons of President Eliphalet and Sarah Benedict Nott. The old Selden estate in Hadlyme (formerly a part of the town of Lyme), which belonged to

Hosted by Google

One of his officers, Eliphalet Holmes, a man of great physical strength, knocked down two Hessians who were attempting to capture him, and escaped. John P. Wyllys, Wadsworth's brigade-major, was taken prisoner in this encounter, and fifty or more men. Gay, with his command, had passed the Boston road, down "Lover's Lane" (now Twenty-first Street) to the Bloomingdale road, and beyond, before the Hessians reached the point of intersection. Silliman's brigade, left to guard the city until the other troops could be withdrawn, and Knox with detachments of artillery, were now in the greatest danger. About thirty minutes after the main column, with its women, children, hangers-on, household stuff, and camp utensils, had passed out of sight on the Broadway road to the north of Walter Rutherford's house, Silliman received orders to follow as far as Bayard's Hill fort, just above Canal Street. Here he saw the British land at Kip's Bay, and supposing the roads closed and departure impossible, prepared for a vigorous defense. At this very instant Putnam, galloping forward, met Washington at the corner of the cross and Bloomingdale roads, now Forty-third Street and Broadway, and paused for hasty consultation. It was clear no stand could be made on Murray Hill. Had the British acted promptly, all the Americans south of Forty-second Street at that hour might have fallen into their hands with ease. A few minutes later Putnam was flying on his foaming steed toward the city to meet and hurry on the column which as yet had only worked its weary way into the region below Bleecker Street; on his route he encountered a portion of Wadsworth's command, and Scott with his retreating forces from Stuyvesant Cove.

For a complete view of the stirring scenes of this day, distances must be considered.[1] A ride from City Hall to Murray Hill, not less than three miles, occupied as much time then as now, and it was not yet noon. Officers only were mounted; the soldiers were all on foot,

Colonel Selden at the time of his death, has been in the possession of the Selden family one hundred and eighty or more years. It is now the property of William Ely Selden.

[1] See map (Vol. II. 68). Few of the cross-roads mentioned in the text were then public thoroughfares, which accounts for their omission upon the maps of the period; but nearly all the localities of interest, with their relative positions, can be traced with the eye. The authorities upon which the text describing the incidents of the 15th of September, 1776, is based, number not less than eighty; of these are the various accounts from the pens of participants and eye-witnesses, many letters having recently been exhumed from family archives. The "Kip's Bay Affair," with the light of a century turned strongly upon it, resolves itself into a justifiable retreat from an overwhelming force; and the "panic," which has furnished opportunity for writers and artists to embellish fiction until it has become grotesque, seems to have been the natural result of extraordinary exposure. As for the story of Washington's wrath, there is little doubt of his having given expression to language more forcible than gentle as he came upon his demoralized troops; but there is not a shadow of evidence that he threw his hat upon the ground, or exposed himself to sharp-shooters, much less to the bayonets of the enemy.

Hosted by Google

wagons were insufficient for the transfer of families, those in use were indiscriminately overladen, and the cannon were chiefly dragged by hand. The day was excessively hot, the roads were darkened by clouds of dust, the people as well as the soldiers on the march had been without sleep for twenty-four or more hours, and deaths occurred from time to time by the wayside from over-exertion and the drinking of water from cool springs.

Aaron Burr, Putnam's aide-de-camp, dashed towards the city in advance of the general to extricate Silliman, who protested that retreat was out of the question. Knox was of the same mind, and disposed to fight to the bitter end. Alexander Hamilton, with his company of New York artillery men, was eager to defend the post. But Burr claimed to know every inch of ground on Manhattan Island, and was confident he could pilot the party through farms and by-ways, and they finally started. Nash, who was present, writes, "The enemy headed us so that we who were left were obliged to make our escape as well as we could, but they did not take many of our men." Overtaking the column, now comprising about three thousand five hundred persons, and stretching two miles, Silliman's party were formed into a rear-guard. Putnam, Silliman, and other officers were on the constant lookout — riding furiously from front to rear and from rear to front — at the same time stimulating an effort for increased speed by encouraging words and their own coolness and intrepidity. The slight, graceful figure of Burr was also everywhere conspicuous. He conducted the train to a road west of Eighth Avenue from Fifteenth Street north, and keeping in the woods, often countermarching, or crooking through irregular lanes to avoid being discovered by the shipping in the North River, the long slowly moving train actually passed Murray Hill within a half mile of the British army as they were complacently eating their midday meal; the men on the grass in the trim grounds of the Murrays, and the officers, Howe, Clinton, Cornwallis, and Governor Tryon, partaking of generous hospitalities within the mansion. Mrs. Murray, the mother of Lindley Murray, the grammarian, was personally known to Tryon; he introduced the British generals, who, charmed with the luxury of her cool parlors and the tempting wine with which she bountifully supplied them, loitered in gay and trivial conversation for two hours. Thatcher, relating the incident in his journal, says, "It has since become almost a common saying among our officers, that Mrs. Murray saved this part of the American army." As soon as the second division of the British under Percy had crossed from Long Island, and could support the troops posted at "Inclenberg," a detachment was sent to capture a corps of Americans descried about three miles

Hosted by Google

distant, near McGowan's Pass, which proved to be the regiments of Mifflin and Smallwood sent by Washington to cover Putnam's escape, and who retired towards Harlem Heights as the enemy approached. The column of Putnam, coming down through the Hoagland farm, passed the junction of the Bloomingdale and Kingsbridge roads, as these British troops appeared on the right. Humphrey says: "So critical indeed was our situation and so narrow the gap by which we escaped, that the instant we had passed, the enemy closed it by extending their line from river to river." They attacked the tired column with spirit, but Silliman with three hundred men beat them off. In this skirmish Hamilton, who had marched the whole distance in the rear of the line, aided materially with his cannon; Sergeant Hoyt, in charge of the extreme rear gun, dragged it to an eminence by the roadside and fired it continuously until the whole train had safely rounded the point of danger. Hoyt was one of those in the last boat (discovered and fired upon by the British) in the notable Long Island retreat, and was chosen for this post of exceptional peril because of his unflinching nerve and heroic mettle.

It began to rain towards evening, and then a cold wind came up; and when at a late hour Putnam's party reached the encampment on the heights, "above the Eight mile stone" they were not only worn out with the march of over thirteen winding miles, but drenched and chilled to the bone. They had lost knapsacks, baggage, hope, and confidence, and, grieving for the artillery and costly works sacrificed, made their beds upon the wet ground, the threatening clouds their only covering.

Washington remained at the Apthorpe Mansion striving to cover his anxiety under an aspect of stoical serenity until the enemy were in sight, then rode to the Morris House on Harlem Heights. The British soon stretched from Horn's Hook (Ninety-second Street) to McGowan's Pass, and across the beautiful hills to the northwest, their left flank resting on the Hudson. Howe and his officers rode leisurely up from Murray Hill and found a well-cooked supper awaiting them at Apthorpe's; while their warriors borrowed sheep and geese at random and made themselves comfortable for the night. The city meanwhile was occupied by a division of the army of King George. Ferry-boats had crossed to the Jersey shore during the day, many persons escaping by that source who were unable to leave with Putnam; among these was Hugh Gaine, editor, compositor, and publisher of *The New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, who, with his press, took quarters in Newark, New Jersey; and citizens in hiding returned to New York by the same means to welcome the British. At evening the passage was closed. Thus Manhattan slept.

Before daylight next morning Washington was in the saddle. His

Hosted by Google

first important act was to send Knowlton with a picked company of one hundred and twenty men to learn the position of, and, if practicable, take the enemy's advanced guard. The second was to visit the various encampments to "put matters in a proper situation" should the British come on as expected.[1] Knowlton from near headquarters descended the ravine, now Audubon Park, leading his men along the low shore of the river to Matjte Davits Fly,[2] and beyond into the woods that skirted the bank west of Vanderwater's Heights, until parallel with the left flank of the vanguard of the enemy under General Leslie. Here he was discovered at sunrise, and attacked by four hundred of the British light infantry; he allowed them to come within six rods before giving orders to fire, and after eight rounds apiece, he commanded a retreat which decoyed the adversary, in the language of Sir Henry Clinton, "into a scrape."[3] One of Knowlton's officers wrote, "we retreated two miles and a half and then made a stand, and sent for reinforcements which we soon received, and drove the dogs near three miles." There is no discrepancy between this statement and the report of De Heister, who said, "They retired into their entrenchments to entice the pursuers deeper into the wood."

Confusion as to localities has resulted from the blending of two distinct encounters in the descriptions of the battle of Harlem Heights. The first was at sunrise, occupying but a few minutes. The second commenced between ten and eleven o'clock in the forenoon and continued nearly four hours.[4] It was the former to which Lewis Morris referred in writing to his father: "Monday morning an advanced party, Colonel Knowlton's regiment, was attacked by the enemy upon a height a little to the southwest of Dayes' Tavern." And it was the second and chief battle which the pen-and-ink sketch furnished the Convention shortly afterward, and subsequently presented by John Sloss Hobart to Rev. Dr. Stiles, President of Yale College, describes as "beginning near the Ten mile stone and ending near the Eight mile stone." Washington's headquarters at the Morris house was three and one half miles from

[1] *Washington's Letters.*

[2] Matjte Davits Fly was a well-known public landmark (a meadow,) which for a century had been mentioned in charters, patents, deeds, and Acts of the Legislature, and laid down with the utmost precision by actual survey.

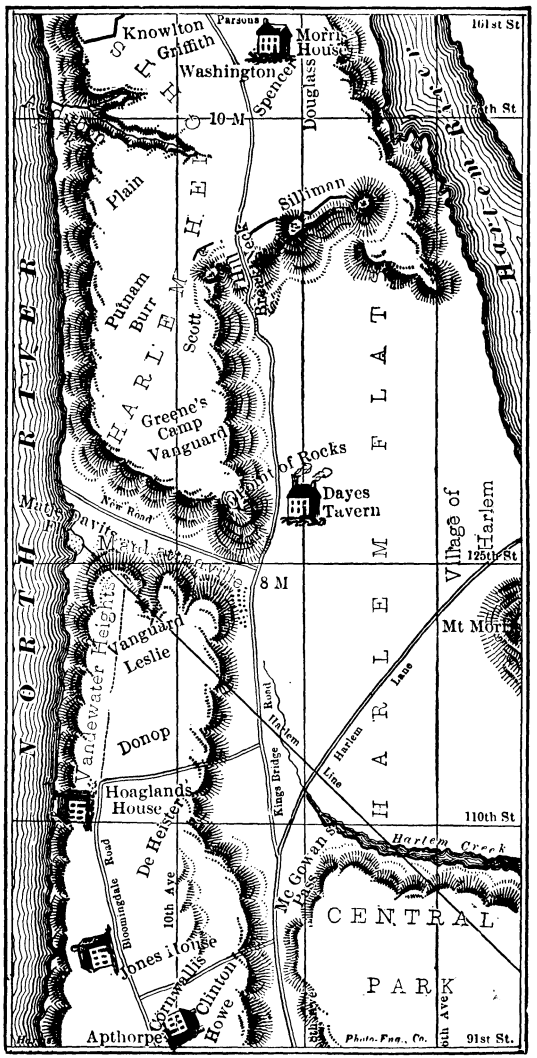
[3] Manuscript note in Sir Henry Clinton's private copy of *Stedman's History of the American War*, in possession of John Carter Brown, Providence, R. I.; *De Lancey's Notes to Jones's History; Donop's Account; Journal of De Heister; Baurmeister's Report; Stewart's Sketches of the Highlanders; Sir William Howe to Lord Germain*, Sept. 21, 1776.

[4] *General Gold Selleck Silliman to his wife*, Sept. 17, 1776 (original in possession of his granddaughter, Mrs. Oliver P. Hubbard), *Jones's History of New York in the Revolution*, Vol. I. *De Lancey's Notes*, 606, 607. *Jay*, 57.

Hosted by Google

Howe's headquarters at the Apthorpe Mansion. The army of each was thrown out in front for a mile and three quarters, Washington's advanced guard under Greene being in the woods above, and his pickets upon the "Point of Rocks" which overlooked Manhattanville, while Howe's were upon Vanderwater's Heights, opposite. During the interval between the two battles the light infantry of Leslie were silently pushing their way after Knowlton along the low shore of the Hudson.

"As yet no fortifications had been erected across Harlem Heights," wrote Silliman, — and also George Clinton, — "except a mere beginning near the Morris house, and three small redoubts about halfway to Manhattanville"; from the first gray dawn he had a large force of men employed at this latter point with spades and shovels throwing earth into the trenches; ere night-fall lines were completed across the island, and subsequently strengthened. Washington galloped to Greene's encampment, where, seated upon his horse, at sunrise he heard the firing between Knowlton and Leslie, and saw large bodies



Sketch of Battle-Field, Harlem Heights.

[Showing the relative position of the two hostile armies of Great Britain and America, Sept. 16, 1776. Compiled from the most authentic sources. By the author.] [Topography traced from Colton's map.]

Hosted by Google

of the enemy upon "the high ground opposite." He returned to the Morris House and hurriedly breakfasted. Uneasy about Knowlton, he sent scouts for information, when presently that handsome, animated young officer appeared in his presence asking for reinforcements to capture his pursuers. Almost simultaneously one hundred of the British light infantry, who had clambered up the steep close in Knowlton's footsteps, came out upon the plain and blew their bugle-horns, as usual after a fox-chase. They had at the same time left three hundred men concealed in the woods on the river-bank. Washington ordered Major Leitch with a detachment of Virginia riflemen to join Knowlton and his rangers, and, with Reed as a guide, "to steal" around to the rear of the foe by their right flank, while another detachment was to feign an attack in front. There was a hollow way, or ravine, coursed by a winding stream, between the two hostile parties, not far from the Ten mile stone, terminating at Audubon Park. The British upon the plain (some two hundred feet above the Hudson), seeing so few coming out to fight, ran jubilantly down the slope towards them and took post behind a rail-fence, firing briskly. As the Americans pushed forward they left the fence, retiring up the hill. The rattle of musketry soon brought their reserve corps to the rescue; and just then, by some mistake or failure to obey orders to the letter, never satisfactorily explained, the spirited charge of the rangers and riflemen began upon the flank of the enemy, instead of the rear, as intended. Both Knowlton and Leitch fell within ten minutes, near each other, and within a few paces of Reed, whose horse was shot from under him.[1] But the tide was turning, and the British giving way in an open-field conflict. Washington reinforced his gallant soldiers with detachments from the nearest regiments, Griffith's, Richardson's, Nixon's, Douglass's, and others, and the very men who had been so severely criticised for running from Kip's Bay the day before redeemed themselves from the odium by deeds of noble daring.[2] Putnam, Reed, and other prominent officers took command, charging upon the British and driving them from the plain; they fled through a piece of woods, becoming scattered and fighting from behind trees and bushes, and then into a buckwheat field. By this time it was nearly noon.

The British officers, meanwhile, were on the alert, and troops were for-

[1] "Knowlton fell," said Aaron Burr, "about One Hundred and Fifty-third Street and Eleventh Avenue." *Battle of Harlem Heights*, by Chancellor Erastus C. Benedict.

[2] "The enemy (Americans) possessed great advantage from the circumstance of engaging within a half-mile of their entrenched camp whence they could be supplied with fresh troops as often as occasion required." *Stedman's History of the American War*; *Jay*, 80, 81. This accords with the well-known fact that the greater portion of Washington's troops were encamped on the morning of September 16, in the vicinity of the Morris House.

Hosted by Google

warded on the trail of Leslie, whose disappearance in the early morning with his light infantry had caused no little solicitude. At the sound of guns on Harlem Heights, Howe sent other reinforcements of Highlanders and Hessians on the double quick to their relief. An Englishman wrote: "At eleven we were instantly trotted about three miles (without a halt to draw breath) to support a battalion of light infantry which had imprudently advanced so far without support as to be in great danger of being cut off." One thousand of the reinforcing troops encountered Greene's two brigades, a sharp fight ensuing not far from his encampment;[1] others proceeded further north on the low shore before mounting the heights, and joined their comrades in the buckwheat field just as the sun crossed the meridian. Through "more succors from each party" the battle was here maintained for nearly two hours with an obstinacy rarely equaled in the history of modern warfare. The enemy finally "broke and ran," and were driven and chased (the Americans mocking their bugles) "above a mile and a half" wrote Reed, "nearly two miles" wrote Knox, taking shelter in an orchard finally near the Eight mile stone, when Washington prudently sent Tilghman to order the victorious soldiers back to the lines. Thomas Jones, known as "the fighting Quaker of Lafayette's army," said, "we drove the British up the road and down Break Neck Hill, which was the reason they called it Break Neck Hill."[2]

This battle, the most brilliant and important in historical results of any fought during the Revolutionary War, was evidently a part of the British plan to drive the Americans from the island before they should have time to construct defenses. The blunder of Leslie in beginning the battle too soon, and in the wrong place, occasioned the succession of British failures which furnished the Americans food for self-confidence until peace was proclaimed. Washington's army on Harlem Heights numbered, on the 16th, scarcely eight thousand, and yet four thousand nine hundred were engaged — according to a careful estimate from re-

[1] *Greene to Governor Cooke* of Rhode Island, Sept. 17, 1776; *Jay*, 55; *Smallwood to the Maryland Convention*, Oct. 12, 1776; *Beatty to his father, William Beatty* of Maryland, Sept. 18, 1776; *Shaw's Journal*, 20; *Nash Journal*, 33, 34; *Samuel Chase to General Gates*, Sept. 21, 1776; *Nicholas Fish to John McKesson*, Secretary of the Convention, Sept. 19, 1776; *John Gooch to Thomas Fayerweather*, Sept. 23, 1776.

[2] *Humphrey Jones, son of Thomas Jones, to Chancellor Erastus C. Benedict*, Feb. 8, 1878. This letter is an important link in the chain of evidence which locates the battle of Harlem Heights. The distances named in the contemporaneous correspondence are also notably significant. Silliman wrote: "The fire continued very heavy from the musketry and from field-pieces about two hours, in which time our people drove the regulars back from post to post *about a mile and a half.*" Had the battle occurred south of Manhattanville, and the enemy been driven *a mile and a half*, the Americans would have been in the immediate vicinity of the Apthorpe Mansion!

Hosted by Google

ports of officers in each detachment. The British were superior in numbers, not less than five or six thousand of their choicest troops, with seven field-pieces, being in the action — while eight or ten thousand men were in arms ready to push on.[1] It was an irregular battle from the very character of the picturesque, undulating, wooded heights, with their rough, rocky, and almost inaccessible sides, — natural buttresses, supporting plains, ridges, heavily shaded ravines, and small hills upon hills. Large bodies could move considerable distances without being seen. The British plunged in wherever there was an opening. The combatants were in scouts and squads, in battalions and in brigades. They fought in the woods, from behind trees, bushes, rocks, and fences, and they fought on the plain and in the road. The battle raged from about One Hundred and Fifty-fifth Street nearly to Manhattanville. The enemy, according to Baurmeister, lost seventy killed and two hundred wounded. The Americans, twenty-five killed and fifty-four wounded. Henshaw, in a letter to his wife, places the American loss at one hundred; others have claimed that only fifteen lives were lost. Knowlton was deeply mourned. He was an officer who would have been an honor to any country. His last words were, "Have we driven the enemy?"[2] Leitch, one of Virginia's worthiest sons, survived his wounds until October 1.

The success of this day turned the current of affairs. Henceforward the Americans believed in themselves. With their first opportunity, they had fought the enemy upon equal footing; and had virtually defeated the entire plan of the British commanders with regard to northward and eastward conquest. Faces brightened with joy, sinking hearts leaped tumultuously with hope, and men worked in the trenches with a vigor that spread like a contagion. At evening the armies occupied the same relative positions as before the battle, the British upon Bloomingdale (or, as more generally called, Vanderwater's) Heights, and the Americans upon Harlem Heights, their pickets almost within speaking distance

[1] These facts are well authenticated, and were there no other evidence, are sufficient to preclude the possibility of the battle having been fought upon Vanderwater's Heights, since Washington in his weak and dispirited condition would never have been so indiscreet as to have sent half his available forces across (what would have proved a death-trap for every man in case of defeat and retreat) the Manhattanville hollow way, and attempted to maintain a contest within the British lines under such overwhelming disadvantage.

[2] Colonel Thomas Knowlton was born in West Boxford, Massachusetts, November 30, 1740. He was the third son of William Knowlton, who purchased four hundred acres of land in Ashford, Connecticut, whither the family removed during the boyhood of Thomas. He enlisted in the army at fifteen, during the French War, and was present at the capture of Ticonderoga and at the reduction of Havana. He was the companion of Putnam through many dangers and achievements, and specially distinguished himself by his gallantry at the battle of Bunker Hill. Leitch was buried by his side.

Hosted by Google

("three hundred yards") of each other across the Manhattanville valley.[1] And thus they remained for upwards of three weeks.

Howe was deeply mortified. His general orders next morning rebuked Leslie for imprudence.[2] The "affair" was mentioned as one "of outposts" and no detailed account of it was given. It was none the less a battle however, and so esteemed at the time by all concerned. And it was not only the first victory of the Americans in a well-contested action with the flower of the British soldiery, coloring all the future of America, but it added materially to the caution which clogged Howe's subsequent movements. He regarded Harlem Heights henceforward as invulnerable. He wrote to the ministry, "the enemy is too strongly posted to be attacked in front, and innumerable difficulties are in the way of turning him upon either side." He took ample time for consideration, and then made elaborate arrangements to throw himself in the rear of Washington by way of Westchester.[3]

[1] Graydon's statement, that "our most advanced picket towards New York at the 'Point of Rocks' was only separated from that of the enemy by a valley a few hundred yards over," is in harmony with what Harris writes: "After landing in York Island, we drove the Americans into their works beyond the eighth mile-stone from New York, and took post opposite to them, placed our picquets," etc. Thus from the evening of the 15th, Vanderwater's Heights was practically British ground.

[2] *From MS. Order-Book of British Foot-Guards*, Sept. 17, 1776. "The commander-in-chief disapproves the conduct of the light company in pursuing the Rebels without proper discretion and without support." *From Donop's Report*, "General Leslie had made a great blunder in sending these brave fellows so far in advance, in the woods without support." *From Baurmeister's Report*, "The English Light Infantry advanced too quickly on the retreat of the enemy, and at Bruckland Hill fell into an ambuscade of four thousand men, and if the Grenadiers, and especially the Hessian yagers, had not arrived in time to help them not one of these brave light troops would have escaped."

[3] The various theories advanced by distinguished writers concerning the site of the battle of Harlem Heights seem to have been the result of peculiar ambiguity in the accounts hastily penned at the time. There were then few landmarks to date from; in speaking of hills and hollow ways there were several between the Morris House and the Apthorpe Mansion; thus it would be hopeless to undertake to locate them from words alone. It is only by a critical comparison of the fifty or more narrations of the events of that day by those present, using each individual scrap of information, however insignificant in itself, to amplify or explain some other, that the missing links are all embodied, and the mosaic assumes an intelligible and authentic form. No one engaged can see the whole of a battle. Each writer registered, as far as he went, portions of the truth, as it appeared to his view. All agree as to distances. The sketch illustrates the topography of the region, and will aid the reader in locating the battle-field. Authorities compared include, *Hon. John Jay's Commemorative Oration; Appendix to Jay's Oration*, by William Kelby, Assistant Librarian of N. Y. Hist. Soc., embracing contemporaneous written evidence from thirty-four Americans, eight British, and five Hessian pens; *Johnson's Campaign of* 1776 *around New York and Brooklyn; Bancroft's History of the United States; Force; Sparks; Irving; Stedman; Lossing: Dawson; Dunlap; Miss Booth; Lushington's Life of Lord Harris; Humphrey's Life of Putnam; Heath's Memoirs; Benedict's Battle of Harlem Heights*, and many others.

Hosted by Google

The city meanwhile was transformed. Houses of persons disloyal to the king were marked with a broad R; all rebel property was confiscated to the government and many houses belonging to individuals who had had no part nor share in the Revolution were also marked. This last outrage was supposed to have been the work of parties without authority, with personal reasons, but no redress could be obtained. Jones says, "the soldiers broke open the City Hall and plundered it of the College Library, its Mathematical and Philosophical apparatus, and a number of valuable pictures which had been removed there by way of safety when the rebels converted the College (Columbia) into a hospital. They also plundered it of all the books belonging to the subscription library, as also of a valuable library which belonged to the corporation, the whole consisting of not less than sixty thousand volumes.[1] This was done with impunity, and the books publicly hawked about the town for sale by private soldiers, their trulls and doxeys. I saw an Annual Register neatly bound and lettered, sold for a dram, Freeman's Reports for a shilling, and Coke's 1st Institutes, or what is usually called Coke upon Littleton, was offered to me for 1*s.* 6*d.* I saw in a public house upon Long Island nearly forty books bound and lettered, in which were affixed the arms of Joseph Murray under pawn from one dram to three drams each.[2] To do justice even to rebels, let it here be mentioned that though they were in full possession of New York for nearly seven months, and had in it at times above forty thousand soldiers, neither of these libraries were ever meddled with. No orders from the British commanders discountenanced these unmilitary and unjustifiable proceedings." Every available shelter was in demand for the accommodation of the garrison. Families were compelled to be hospitable, whether agreeable or otherwise. The widow of Thomas Clarke remained at her pretty country-seat between Twentieth and Twenty-third Streets, near Tenth Avenue, having been advised "to stick to her property." Her distress and alarm may be imagined, as a party of Hessians were quartered in and about her quiet home. The commanding officer, however, was a gentleman as well as a nobleman,[3] and proved so agreeable that he became a favorite with the

[1] See Vol. I. 532, 647.

[2] See Vol. I. 599, 608, 636, 640. Joseph Murray was a lawyer who made a large fortune in New York, and was a prominent and useful citizen. His wife was the first cousin of the Earl of Halifax, and daughter of Governor Cosby of New York.

[3] The military services of Germany and Austria are the most aristocratic in Europe in 1876, as they were in 1776. None but nobles could hold commissions under any GermanSovereign. The officers were all noblemen. As far as birth was concerned the Hessian officers as a whole in Howe's army were superior to the English officers as a whole. A rich Englishman could buy a commission for his son for the express purpose of making the boy a gentleman.

Hosted by Google

family. He told Mrs. Clarke's daughters that he heard of their dread of his coming to the house, which made him the more anxious "to prove the injustice of their apprehensions." These young ladies were, the wife of the Right Rev. Bishop Moore and her sisters.

Ere the week which had opened with the roar of artillery came to an end, New York was in flames. About one o'clock on the morning of Saturday, the 21st, a fire broke out near Whitehall Slip. A fresh gale was blowing from the south, and the weather was dry, thus it spread with inconceivable rapidity. It coiled itself round building after building like a serpent greedy of its prey. Houses and churches disappeared like dissolving views. The panic-stricken and distracted inhabitants were almost as terrible to behold as the roaring conflagration. Blazing fire-brands leaped along in advance of the lurid column, and little fires were breaking out everywhere. People ran along the streets to see, and the fire went over their heads and flanked them.[1] Even the red heavens seemed also on fire. The British, maddened by the supposition that it was the work of the Americans, visited the most revolting cruelties upon persons who were trying to save property, killed some with the bayonet, tossed others into the flames, and one who, it is said, was a royalist, they hanged by the heels until he died. The wind veering as the great fire-tempest swept up the east side of Broadway, near Beaver Street, it crossed, and presently Trinity Church was a blackened heap of ruins, together with the parsonage, charity school, and Lutheran Church. A number of citizens went upon the flat roof of St. Paul's Church, and extinguished the flakes of fire as they fell, thus saving the beautiful edifice. All the houses west of Broadway to the North River were consumed, the fire being checked only when it reached the College grounds. The map will show the reader its course and extent. Howe attributed the calamity to a conspiracy. It was generally attributed to incendiaries, and some two

Sept. 21.

In Germany the youth must possess the aristocratic prefix of "Von" or "De" to aspire to a commission. The Hessian officers in America were polite, courteous, well-bred, and educated, almost without exception. *De Lancey's Mount Washington and its Capture*; *Mag. Amer. Hist.*, Vol. I. 76. The property of Mrs. Clarke was called the Chelsea farm. The mansion and a part of the land came into possession of Bishop Moore by the will of Mrs. Clarke in 1802. It subsequently belonged to Clement C. Moore, the son of the Bishop.

[1] "If one was in one street and looked about, the fire broke out already in another street above; and thus it raged all the night, and till about noon." *Diary of Rev. Mr. Shewkirk* (pastor of the Moravian Church, Fulton Street), *Saturday, Sept.* 21. *Barber's New York; David Grim's Account, Val. Man.* 1866; *Bancroft's Hist. U. S*; *Frank Moore's Diary of the Revolution; Freeman's Journal*, Oct. 5. 1776; *Dunlap*, 11, 78, 79: *Howe to Germain*, Sept. 23, 1776; *Tryon to Germain*, Sept. 24, 1776; *John Sloss Hobart to the New York Convention*, Sept. 25, 1776; *Colonel Hartley to General Gates*, Oct. 10, 1776; *Rev. Dr. Charles Inglis to Dr. Hind*, Oct. 31, 1776.

Hosted by Google



Map of Great Fire 1776.

hundred persons were arrested upon suspicion and incarcerated. Every person who was known to have talked inconsiderately was seized. Examinations, however, elicited no proofs of guilt, and one after another was liberated. The origin of the fire was subsequently traced to a midnight carousal in a small public house of low character near White-Slip. It is said that the night being chilly, the half drunken beings brought in some boards or rails, and kindled the ends in a large old-fashioned fire-place; the fire creeping along the dry timber soon communicated with the floor. The sequel has been told.

As the sun was declining behind the smoking and still burning ruins, towards evening of the same day, Nathan Hale was brought into New York a captive spy, and taken before Lord Howe at the Beekman Mansion[1] on the height near Fifty-first Street and East River, the elegant

[1] See Sketch of Mansion. Vol. I., 569.

Hosted by Google

home of James Beekman, who had fled with his family into the country to share the fortunes of America. Hale was a young captain of twenty-one, of great beauty of character, a Yale graduate, and, like André, already betrothed. He volunteered for the dangerous duty, went from Harlem to Norwalk, Connecticut, and in the garb of a school-teacher, crossed the Sound in a sloop and plunged boldly into the enemy's country. He crossed into New York and returned to Brooklyn, and had reached the shore and was waiting to step aboard the craft for Norwalk, when it is said he was betrayed by a relative, who recognized him in a Huntington tavern. He was tried, according to tradition, in the greenhouse of the Beekman Mansion; he frankly admitted his rank in Washington's army, said he had been a spy, and had been successful in his search for knowledge, and calmly received his sentence to be executed on the following morning at dawn. He was denied a clergyman, and a Bible; and the letters penned to his mother, his sister, and his lady-love, through the kindness of an officer in furnishing him with pen and ink, were torn up by the brutal Cunningham. His last words were, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country." The story of his heroic death soon became known throughout the army, and inspired his comrades like a victory.

On the same date (September 21) also passed away Lieutenant-Governor Cadwallader Colden, at his country-seat in Flushing, Long Island, at the advanced age of eighty-nine.

The Tuesday following, five hundred prisoners of war sent from Quebec by Carleton, on parole, were landed at Elizabethtown point. It was near midnight, and the bright full moon shone from a cloudless sky. Daniel Morgan was of the number. As he sprang from the bow of the boat he fell to the earth as if to clasp it, exclaiming "O, my country!" He had been offered a commission in the British army if he would go over to that side, and had resented it as an insult. Upon hearing of his return, Washington hastened his exchange, and recommended his promotion.

It was not all quiet at Harlem Heights (henceforth oftener called Mount Washington) although both armies were apparently inactive. There were perpetual skirmishes and alarms. In a well-planned but unsuccessful effort to recapture Randall's Island, Thomas Henley of Charlestown, Massachusetts, one of the most promising of officers, lost his life. The utmost industry prevailed in the matter of fortification. Three lines of intrenchments were thrown across the heights, besides several batteries and redoubts at various points overlooking Harlem and fronting the enemy. Fort Washington was converted into a fortress of great strength, upon the line of One Hundred Eighty-third Street, two hundred and thirty

Hosted by Google

feet above the Hudson. It was opposite Fort Lee (Constitution) on the Jersey shore. Two hundred men were employed vigorously loading vessels with stone and sinking them at this point to obstruct the passage of British ships into the upper Hudson. For two weeks grain and hay in large quantities lay unmolested upon Harlem Flats. Both armies looked at and coveted it. Finally Washington sent several hundred men with wagons to garner it in; a covering party approached the enemy, who manned their lines, anticipating an attack. The two hostile forces stood and blinked at each other, but neither fired a shot. Meanwhile the business was accomplished; and both parties retired laughing within their lines.

Lord and General Howe took occasion meanwhile to publish another declaration to the inhabitants of America on the subject of their grievances, promising in the king's name a revision of his instructions, and pardons and favors to all who would return to their allegiance. They were disappointed in its effects. The men were fewer upon this side of the water disposed to join the British army than had been represented. At the same time the cunning scheme created no little despondency and discontent in the various districts along the Hudson, and filled the minds of the American leaders with apprehension. Robert R. Livingston wrote from the Convention, "We are constantly engaged in the detection of treasons, yet plots multiply upon us daily, and we have reason every moment to dread an open rebellion." William A. Duer wrote from the same body, "The committee to which I belong make daily fresh discoveries of the infernal practices of our enemies to excite insurrections among the people of New York." Washington appealed to Congress on the subject of short enlistments, which was demoralizing in the extreme, and urged the reorganization of the army on a more substantial basis. The strange, whimsical, scoffing Lee at the same moment was abusing Congress for refusing to give him a separate command on the Delaware — he was ordered to Washington's camp instead. He obeyed, tardily, writing to Gates shortly after, "Congress seems to stumble at every step. I do not mean one or two of the cattle but the whole stable. In my opinion General Washington is much to blame in not menacing them with resignation, unless they refrain from unhinging the army by their absurd interference." Lord Stirling, about the same time cheered the camp at Harlem Heights by his presence, an exchange of prisoners having been successfully negotiated.

Notwithstanding the labor expended upon obstructions in the Hudson, three British ships passed them safely on the morning of the 9th.
Oct. 9. On the 12th Howe's army was in motion. Men-of-war sailed up

Hosted by Google

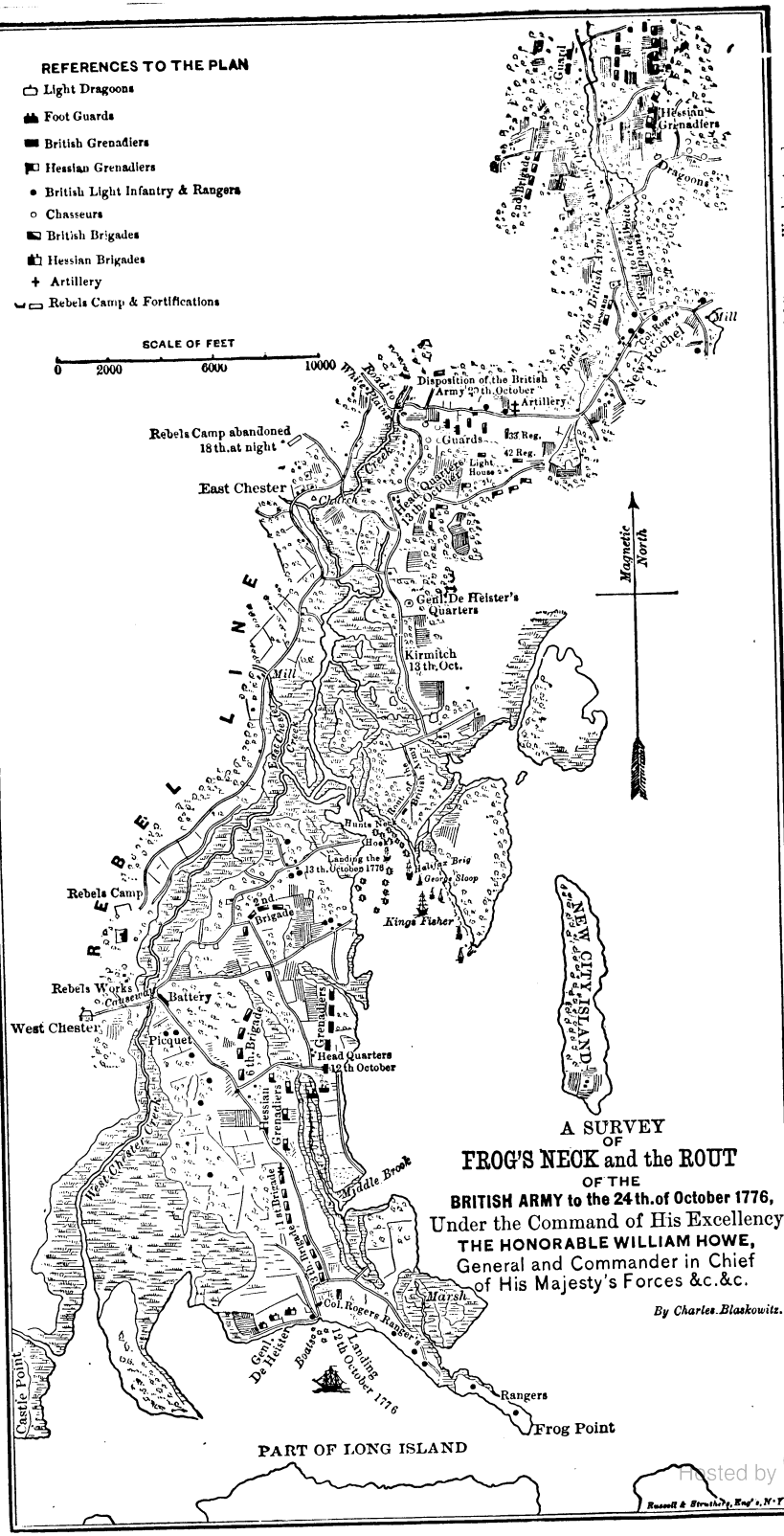
the East River, and flat-bottomed boats with bright scarlet burdens floated upon the bosom of the shining waters. The landing was at Frog's Neck,[1] practically a tide island, which was then connected with the main by a bridge over a mill-dam, which, built by Caleb Heathcoate in 1695, stood until February 1875, when it was accidentally burned. "Had they pushed their imaginations to discover the worst place," wrote Duer, "they could not have succeeded better." Hand and his brave riflemen, stationed the other side of the bridge, pulled up the planks, and Prescott, of Bunker Hill renown, with his command behind breastworks hastily thrown up, resisted every attempt of the enemy to cross; relieved from time to time by other regiments, the Americans actually prevented Howe from marching beyond the cover of his shipping. After losing five days, he re-embarked his troops and crossed to Pell's Neck. Oct. 12

On the 16th a council of war at the Morris House pronounced it impracticable to blockade the Sound, or even the North River; thus the only method of preventing the British from cutting off Washington's communication with the country was an immediate northern movement towards the strong grounds in the upper part of Westchester County. Detailing a garrison for the holding of Fort Washington, the march began next morning. Lee was sent forward to Valentine's Hill, and one brigade was folded behind another, dragging guns by hand and carrying luggage on the shoulder, keeping along the ridge of high ground to the west of the Bronx River, and throwing up a continuous chain of intrenchments with each day's progress. Oct. 16.

On the 18th, the whole British army were in motion. At East Chester a sharp skirmish occurred; the light infantry advancing towards the Hudson were valiantly faced by Glover's brigade from behind stone walls, and retired after losing several men. Howe's troops halted for the night upon their arms near New Rochelle. The British chieftain remained here two days, studying the geography of Westchester, and making every arrangement for advance with military precision; thus he lost his prey. He discovered and captured two thousand bushels of salt which had been stored in the New Rochelle Church, and plundered the inhabitants indiscriminately of horses, cattle, and grain. On the 21st he occupied the heights north of New Rochelle on both sides of the road leading to Scarsdale. The Americans were at the same date nearly abreast. They had the advantage of the shortest distance and the strongest ground. "We press him (Howe) close to Sound," wrote Tilghman, Oct. 18. Oct. 21.

[1] Frog's Neck is a corruption of Throg's Neck, itself an abbreviation of Throckmorton's Neck, so called from its first English settlers.

Hosted by Google



[This Map, illustrating the route of the British Army from Frog's Neck to White Plains, is a fac-simile copy of the original draft now in the Congressional Library at Washington.]

Digitized by Google

"from which he has made no westing in the sea phrase, and if he make much more easting, and endeavors to stretch across, he will need as large an army as that of Xerxes to form a line." Both armies were deficient in the means of transportation. Howe was hindered by the destruction of bridges and the felling of trees across the roads. It took him as long to overcome these obstacles as it did Washington to throw up stone-walls and cover them with earth. Howe was in a perpetual state of alarm also, for he was not blind to the generalship of his adversary. He marched in solid columns, and all his encampments were well guarded with artillery. On the 25th he advanced within four miles of White Plains and again halted. Washington had reached and fortified certain high points in that village, intending to make a stand, not so much that a battle was courted as to draw the enemy forward and waste his time. The 27th was marked by an unsuccessful attack upon Fort Washington, by Lord Percy, aided by the ships in the Hudson.

Sept. 25.

The morning of the 28th saw Howe's troops moving forward, intending apparently to fight a great battle. Sir Henry Clinton and the brave De Heister commanded the two chief divisions. At Hart's Corner they drove back a party of Americans under Spencer who had been sent out to delay their progress. When within three fourths of a mile, they could see Washington's army in order of battle, upon chosen ground, behind two parallel lines of intrenchments, awaiting their approach with an air of easy self-confidence. Howe carefully measured his chances; should he carry one line there would remain another; if he scaled both, the northern hills would provide for the retreating foe — "the rebel army could not be destroyed." But having come so far he must do something, hence he valiantly attacked a feeble outpost.

Sept. 28.

Chatterton Hill, west of the Bronx, and less than a mile to the southwest of Washington's main army, covered the Tarrytown road; it was fortified, and occupied by a force of about fourteen hundred men under McDougall. Howe directed four thousand of his warriors to dislodge them, while the rest of his army seated themselves on the ground as lookers-on. The scene was in full view of the American army. An ineffectual cannonade was commenced from the east side of the Bronx; then, presently, a red-coated division waded through the shallow river, and struggled through a deadly shower of bullets up the rocky steep. For fifteen minutes they met a determined resistance, but when two fresh regiments attacked his flank, as well as front, McDougall, still preserving his communications, conducted his party safely over the Bronx bridge, and by the road to the American lines. Some eighty were taken prisoners, the whole loss not exceeding one hundred. The British lost double that number.

Hosted by Google

The acquisition of the hill was of no consequence to Howe after all his trouble. It really enfeebled him by dividing his forces. The day was waning, the men were fatigued, and no attempt was made to pursue McDougal or fortify the post. The whole British army lay that night upon their arms in order of battle. The next morning it rained. Howe watched the skies, waiting for fair weather. Washington occupied the day in removing the sick and his stores to the hills, some two miles north, in his rear, where he was also throwing up strong works. The 30th was unfavorable for Howe's progress, and favorable for Washington's plans. Another drenching rain on the 31st, and Howe still remained inactive. That night Washington retired to the new position he had chosen, which could be more easily defended than that in the village of White Plains.

Oct. 31.

On the 5th of November Howe suddenly broke up his encampment in front of Washington's lines and moved towards Dobb's Ferry. He had, prior to this, ordered Baron Von Knyphausen from New Rochelle to Kingsbridge, the American garrison at that post retiring to Fort Washington as he appeared. It was a puzzle to the Americans whether Howe intended to penetrate New Jersey and march to Philadelphia, or embark in vessels on the Hudson and fall upon their rear. A council of war determined to throw an army into the Jerseys and secure Peekskill. As for Fort Washington, it was retained on account of its strategic importance, and to aid Fort Lee, opposite, in blockading the passage of the river.

Nov. 5.

But there was a traitor in that stronghold. William Demont, the adjutant-general of Robert Magaw, commandant of the post, passed undiscovered, on the night of November 2, into the British camp of Earl Percy, carrying plans of Fort Washington, with complete information as to the works and the garrison.[1] Percy despatched a messenger with the news in all haste to Howe at White Plains, who, seeing how he could capture an important fortress, without much risk, and thus control the Hudson and the country beyond, started without a moment's delay, reaching Dobb's Ferry on the 6th. The next day he sent artillery to Knyphausen at Kingsbridge, and placed batteries in position on the Westchester side of the Harlem River to cover selected points of attack. These and other active preparations went forward without exciting suspicion in the mind of Washington as to the real purpose of the enemy. On the 12th the whole British army moved to Kingsbridge and encamped along the high grounds of Harlem River, with his right on the Bronx and his left on the

[1] *DeLancey's Notes to Jones's History of New York during the Revolutionary War*, Vol. I., 626–636; *DeLancey's Mount Washington and its Capture; Mag. Amer. Hist.*, Vol. I.

Hosted by Google

Hudson. Four separate points of attack were planned, and subsequently carried out to the letter. On the night of the 14th thirty row-boats, chiefly from the fleet, passed undiscovered up the North River, through Spuyten Duyvel into the Harlem River, ready for use. On the morning of the 15th Howe summoned Magaw to surrender, under penalty of a storm (which by military law is liability to be put to the sword if taken), and gave him two hours to decide. Magaw at once returned the brave answer, "I am determined to defend this post to the last extremity." Greene was at Fort Lee, and approved Magaw's action; he sent a messenger with the intelligence directly to Washington at Hackensack, where he was arranging for the reception of his army then crossing the Hudson at Peekskill, who rode in all haste to Fort Lee. Finding that Greene was at Mount Washington, he embarked in a row-boat to cross the river, although it was late in the evening, but met Greene and Putnam returning when about midway between the two shores; they told him that the troops were in high spirits, and would make a good defense; hence they together repaired to Fort Lee. Not one among the American officers dreamed that it was treason with which they were contending. Washington's judgment was opposed to holding Fort Washington, but, governed by the wishes of Congress and a vote of the council of war, he had hitherto left its evacuation to the discretion of Greene, who was on the spot watching the movements of the enemy, and confident that if matters came to the worst the garrison could be withdrawn. Nov. 15.

The next morning was fair. At early dawn there were active movements upon every side of Mount Washington except the river side. The several British columns all pushed forward simultaneously. Lord Cornwallis climbed the steep heights with his force; Percy, accompanied by Howe who animated the troops by acts of personal bravery, with a column from Harlem Flats, attacked the lower lines; Knyphausen led his men up the Heights through many grave obstacles; and other gallant officers went into the thickest of the fight. The Highlanders rushed up the steep just below the Morris House, and captured over one hundred and fifty Americans, detached to oppose them at that point. The greatest gallantry was exhibited on both sides. Magaw had made good disposition of his forces, considering the ground and the four attacks to be met. But the British, knowing precisely the strength they were to overcome, were provided with the means. As the troops were driven in from the various outer batteries, Magaw found the fort so crowded that further resistance could only involve great sacrifice of life, and, after much parley, signed articles of capitulation with Knyphausen and Colonel Patterson, the British Nov. 16.

Hosted by Google

adjutant-general. In the midst of these negotiations a note from Washington, telling Magaw that if he could hold out till evening an effort would be made to bring off the garrison, was brought by Captain Gooch, who, crossing the Hudson in a small boat, ran up the steep, delivered the message, and, running through the fire of the Hessians, reached his craft and recrossed the river in safety. But it was too late. The terms of surrender had already assumed the form of an agreement. Thus were two thousand eight hundred and eighteen soldiers captured; four officers and fifty privates were among the killed, and ninety-three men were wounded. The British engaged in the battle numbered about eight thousand nine hundred; their loss has been variously estimated, but the total in killed and wounded was four hundred and fifty-eight.

Graydon, a captain in Cadwallader's regiment, one of the prisoners captured, writes, "Howe must have had a perfect knowledge of the ground we occupied." Sixteen years later, the traitor himself, in attempting to recover certain dues from the British government, described his treason over his own signature, stating, explicitly, that through the plans he furnished Lord Percy, "the fortress was taken by his Majesty's troops." This letter, dated London, January 16, 1792, authenticated beyond question, is now in possession of Edward Floyd De Lancey. It is possible that Howe might have moved against Fort Washington without this information, but his chances of success would have been as limited as Greene, Putnam, and Mercer predicted; even Washington, who was in consultation with these generals on the very morning of the battle, seems not to have been alarmed for the safety of the garrison. The losing of so many brave men was painfully disheartening; in addition to which forty-three guns, twenty-eight hundred muskets, four hundred thousand cartridges, fifteen barrels of gunpowder, several thousand shot and shell, and a large quantity of military stores, including "two hundred iron fraise of four hundred weight each, supposed to be intended to stop the navigation of the Hudson River," fell into the hands of the enemy.

Thus was Manhattan Island in complete possession of the British; and the king's fleet might furrow without molestation the Hudson, the East River, and the waters of the Sound.

Fort Lee was of no further importance to the Americans. Washington ordered its stores and guns removed at once, preparatory to its abandonment; this work was in progress and partially effected, when, during the stormy night of the 19th, Lord Cornwallis, with six thousand troops, crossed the Hudson some five miles above, the men dragging cannon by hand up a steep, narrow, rough road (for nearly half a mile), to the top of the palisades, and early in the morning of the 20th commenced

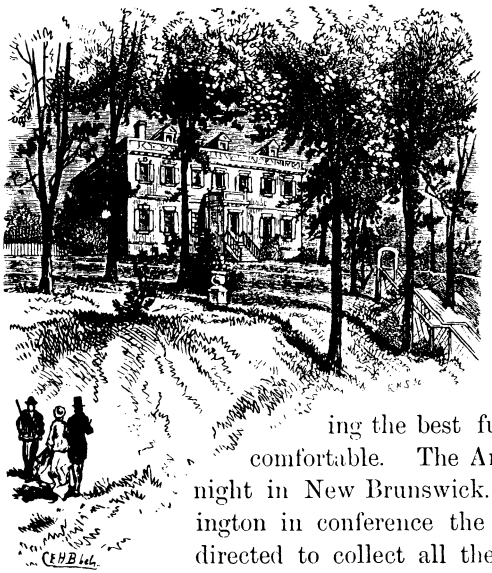
Hosted by Google

a brisk march southward, intending to enclose the garrison between the Hudson and Hackensack Rivers. A farmer brought the tidings to Greene. It was evident that the safety of the troops depended upon the celerity with which they could reach and cross the bridge to the other side of the Hackensack, where Washington and his main army were encamped. The deplorable want of horses and wagons rendered the loss of much baggage and valuable stores inevitable. There was no help for it. Tents were left standing, and fires burning with the soldiers' breakfasts cooking over them. A large, flat, scorched stone is to this day pointed out as the oven where the bread was baking for the officers' table. The vanguard of the British reached the bridge almost as soon as the Americans, but the latter escaped, and Cornwallis did not esteem it worth while to attempt the crossing. Nov. 20.

Washington posted troops along the western bank of the Hackensack, as a show of defense, while he moved his heavy artillery and stores farther inland. But he had no intention of remaining upon this level peninsula, hemmed in by two rivers, without an intrenching tool, and with hundreds of men destitute of shelter from the November elements. He wrote to Lee, at North Castle, to join him quickly with the troops under his command. Towards evening of the same day of hurry and excitement, an express from Heath (who was guarding the Highlands) came upon the scene with a letter for Washington. He met Reed, who, sitting on his horse, wrote to Lee upon a scrap of brown wrapping paper, "Dear General, we are flying before the British. I pray —" and the pencil broke. He added the remainder of the message verbally — "you to push and join us," and bade the horseman speed without loss of time to North Castle. The commission was faithfully executed, and the messenger related also what he had seen with his own eyes. On the 21st Washington crossed the Passaic River; and on the 22d entered Newark, where he remained six days. The diminution of the army through the departure of soldiers whose terms of enlistment had expired was a source of dismay at this juncture. Washington was attended by less than thirty-five hundred troops. Mercer's flying camp was dissolving, his men having engaged to serve only until December 1. Lee did not come to the front as ordered. Schuyler, always on the alert to send help where it was wanted, responded to Washington's appeal to hasten from the North the troops of Pennsylvania and New Jersey to his assistance, but the march was long, their terms nearly expired, and they refused to re-enlist. Mifflin was dispatched to Pennsylvania, where he possessed great influence, to endeavor to raise reinforcements; and Reed was sent to Governor Livingston to press upon his notice the absolute need of unusual exertions to prevent the State of Nov. 21.

Hosted by Google

New Jersey from being overrun by the enemy. Livingston made the most strenuous efforts to have militia in the field in time to oppose the invading force. He issued circulars and he wrote letters; but a panic had seized the mass of the population. Congress was at the same time writing to the North and South, entreating for troops, and begging blankets and woolen stockings for the freezing soldiers. Pennsylvania was paralyzed by anarchy, and by profitless disputes concerning the new constitution. Yet Mifflin was destined to be successful in and about Philadelphia, and men were soon enlisting with enthusiasm.



Home of General Philip Schuyler, Albany.

On the 28th Washington left Newark, as the advanced guard of Cornwallis entered the city, — the British officers quartering themselves in the best houses and demanding the best furniture to make their rooms comfortable. The American army slept the same night in New Brunswick. Livingston was with Washington in conference the following morning, and was directed to collect all the boats on the Delaware for a distance of seventy miles above Philadelphia, and place them under a strong guard. The first day of December came, and also the British van, in full view upon the other side of the Raritan. The Americans broke down the bridge in the face of a heavy cannonade, which was answered by a spirited fire from the battery of Alexander Hamilton, while the barefooted, tattered American army quitted New Brunswick in haste, and marched by night to Princeton. The dazzling, warmly clad, and successful Englishmen seemed to be sweeping all before them; the inhabitants in vast numbers flocked to them for protection; and the Howes cunningly seized this opportunity to issue another proclamation, offering full pardon to all who would within sixty days appear before an officer of the crown and take the oath of submission to Royal authority.

It was now that Washington began to display his great moral and intellectual qualities to advantage. His mind seemed to expand with the darkness of the situation. The deeper the gloom, the brighter and the clearer his mental vision. Livingston had not yet been able to raise one

Hosted by Google

company of recruits in all New Jersey. Reed, while on his mission to the New Jersey government, sent his commission to Congress, through unwillingness to follow "the wretched remains of a broken army." The prospect of the censure he was likely to encounter induced him at the end of four days to retract his resignation; but Washington's affectionate confidence in him was forever impaired. A sarcastic and self-constituted rival was also unexpectedly revealed in Lee, whose neglect to obey orders in this emergency deprived Washington of the aid of a considerable number of soldiers upon whom he had counted with certainty. Men of influence were daily going over to Howe; the State of Maryland was willing to renounce the declaration of the Fourth of July for the sake of an accommodation with Great Britain; and it was rumored that Connecticut had appointed a committee to make peace with the king's commissioners. In Washington's own immediate family officers were criticising each other, and making the character and military conduct of their commander-in-chief the subject of disparaging comments.

Cornwallis halted six days in New Brunswick, not being able to proceed further without positive orders from Howe. Washington left Lord Stirling with twelve hundred men in Princeton, while he went forward to Trenton and transported his remnant of military stores and baggage beyond the Delaware. He then faced about. On the 6th of December Howe joined Cornwallis at New Brunswick, and after deliberate preparations continued the pursuit. Washington, on the counter-march to Princeton, December 8, met Stirling retiring before a superior force, and returning to Trenton, crossed the Delaware in safety. Had Howe, instead of resting seventeen hours at Princeton, pushed forward immediately, the year 1776 might have ended with a very different record. As it was, Cornwallis reached Trenton just in time to see the rear guard of Washington land upon the western bank of the Delaware; he made several unsuccessful efforts to seize boats, and seemed surprised to find them all beyond his reach. He marched thirteen miles up the river to Coryell's Ferry, sending a column also below as if he would entrap the Americans in the acute angle made by the bend of the river opposite Bordentown. But an able disposition of troops on the opposite bank of the Delaware by Washington, and the want of boats, discouraged special efforts. A noted loyalist, in censuring Howe for not crossing immediately and annihilating the American army, said, "There was a board-yard entirely full and directly back of the house in which the commander-in-chief had his headquarters, and which he must have seen every time he looked out of his bedroom window. Besides, there was in Trenton a number of large barns and storehouses, built of boards, out of which rafts

Dec. 8.

Hosted by Google

might have been made, in the space of two days, sufficient to have conveyed the whole British army, with their baggage, artillery, and provisions, across the river."

Putnam was now detached to take command of Philadelphia and put it in a position of defense. Congress retired to Baltimore. Ever since the army separated at White Plains, Lee had acted a mysterious part. His reputation was at its zenith, and not only Congress but the country at large pinned unlimited faith to his knowledge of the art of war. When ordered to New Jersey he raved about the insanity of one army reinforcing another, as if he was holding a separate command. He glibly discussed saving the community regardless of Congress, and wrote to Congress reflecting severely upon Washington's judgment. He was an ambitious aspirant for power. Finally the repeated mandates of his superior admitted of no further evasion, and his division crossed the Hudson December 3. His progress after that was vexatiously slow. He was in Pompton on the 7th; from Morristown he wrote to Congress, December 8, that Washington was all wrong, and that he had no idea of joining him; and to Washington he reported his division as consisting of four thousand noble-spirited men, with whom he would "hang on the enemy's rear." Again ordered peremptorily to the Delaware, he moved forward leisurely, caviling at everything done by others, and in four days had only reached Baskinridge, where he very indiscreetly lodged, with a small guard, in Mr. White's tavern, near the church, some distance from the main body of his troops. A loyalist in the neighborhood rode in all haste with the intelligence to Colonel Harcourt, afterwards Earl Harcourt, who, with a scouting party of seventy dragoons, was watching for an opportunity of distinguishing himself. Early next morning he reached the spot by a rapid march, surrounded the house, and in four minutes was bearing off in triumph the capricious general who had just written boastful letters to the effect that he was reconquering the Jerseys. Lee was at first treated as a deserter from the British service, and not as a prisoner of war. Howe refused to see him at Princeton, and he was taken under a close guard to New York.

Dec. 13.

The command of Lee's division devolved upon Sullivan, who promptly joined Washington on the 20th, the very date of Franklin's arrival in Paris. Gates arrived the same day with some Northern troops, and the army once more numbered nearly seven thousand effective men. In ten days, however, the enlistments of most of the regiments would expire.

It was not a pleasant December, but cold, stormy, and dismal. Howe was tired of discomfort, and preferred winter-quarters in New York, where all was mirth and jollity. He accordingly cantoned some four thousand

Hosted by Google

troops at Trenton, Bordentown, Mount Holly, Princeton, New Brunswick, Amboy, and other points, scattering them even to the Hackensack. Trenton, the most southern of the cantonments, was left guarded by fifteen hundred Hessians, who could not speak a word of English, commanded by Colonel Rahl, a brave officer, but a notorious drunkard. He was averse to taking the trouble to fortify; and when told that Washington contemplated recrossing the Delaware, he laughed at the idea. Was it not December? How could starving men, with neither shoes, stockings, nor blankets, come out to fight in such an inclement season? The rebels were nothing, anyhow, but a pack of cowards. "Let them come," he said, "we will at them with the bayonet."

Howe pompously reported his surprising successes. He was master of New Jersey. He was also master of Rhode Island, having sent Sir Henry Clinton, with ten thousand men, in one hundred transports, escorted by fourteen men-of-war under Sir Peter Parker, to secure Newport, a feat accomplished December 8 without the firing of a gun, since there was no garrison to resist. And Canada had been altogether restored to England by the valiant and humane Carleton.

The game of war, however, was not yet won, as Howe was shortly to learn to his intense mortification. Washington was preparing for a bold dash upon Trenton. Christmas night was fixed for the hazardous undertaking. Gates, like Lee, indulged in the censure of Washington, and was impatient of his supremacy. When desired to take command of a party at Bristol and co-operate in the spirited expedition, he pleaded ill health, and asked leave to go to Philadelphia, actually intending to proceed to Baltimore and lay plans of his own before Congress, with the hope of eclipsing his commander-in-chief. Symptoms of an insurrection obliged Putnam to remain in Philadelphia; but Greene, Sullivan, Mercer, and Stirling were among the general officers; and Stark of New Hampshire, Hand of Pennsylvania, Glover and Knox of Massachusetts, Webb of Connecticut, Scott, William Washington, and James Monroe of Virginia, and Alexander Hamilton of New York, were among the field and other officers with Washington. From the wasted regiments twenty-four hundred men only could be found strong enough and sufficiently clothed to accompany their leaders. The weather was excessively cold, the wind high, the river full of ice, and the current difficult to stem. They began their march at three in the afternoon, with eighteen field-pieces, each man carrying cooked provisions for three days, "and forty rounds." They reached Mackonkey's ferry at twilight. The Marblehead mariners, who did such good service on the retreat from Long Island, bravely manned the boats, Knox superintending the embarkation. At eleven o'clock it

Dec. 25.

Hosted by Google

began to snow. It was four in the morning of the 26th before the troops and cannon were all over the Delaware, and their nine-mile march com-
Dec. 26. menced. Washington's plan included a simultaneous attack from several points. Nearly opposite Trenton, Ewing, Nixon, and Hitchcock were posted with troops, directed to cross and intercept the retreat of the Hessians, or prevent Donop at Burlington from affording relief; and at Bristol, Cadwallader and Reed were also to cross for a similar purpose. The ice rendered it impracticable for the execution of either of these orders. The troops with Washington were formed in two divisions about three miles from the ferry, Sullivan leading one column along the road near the river, and Greene guiding the other upon a road to the left. These roads entered the town at different points, but the distance was nearly the same. Washington was with Greene, whose advanced guard was led by Captain William Washington, with James Monroe (afterwards President of the United States) as first lieutenant. The stinging cold, the beating storm, and the tiresome march were borne bravely by all. At eight o'clock in the morning Trenton was reached. On the route Sullivan sent a messenger in haste to Washington to say that the storm had ruined many of the muskets. "Then use the bayonet, for the town must be taken," was the crisp reply. The snow deadened the tread of the troops and the rumbling of artillery. Thus the surprise was complete. While Washington advanced on the north of the town, Sullivan approached on the west, and Stark was detached to press on the south end of the village. Some five hundred of the enemy at this latter point, seeing Washington coming down in front, as Stark thundered in their rear, fled precipitately by the bridge across the Assanpink, towards Donop, at Bordentown. Washington rode into Trenton beside the artillery, giving directions when and how to fire, but he was presently flying from point to point regardless of his personal safety, and from the swiftness of the manœuvres of his troops the Hessians were allowed no time to form, therefore their firing was all at random and without effect. In thirty-five minutes the action was over. Rahl, in attempting to rally his panic-stricken guard, had fallen mortally wounded, and they immediately surrendered. Washington took possession of nine hundred and fifty prisoners, six brass field-pieces, twelve hundred small-arms, standards, horses, and plunder in immense quantities; this last he advertised, and restored to all such persons as came forward and proved their title to the stolen goods,—an act so humane and just, and so totally unlike the manner in which the people of New Jersey had been treated by their so-called protectors, that there was an immediate revolution in public sentiment which was of lasting importance. Had the two divisions crossed the river as Washington expected,

Hosted by Google

none of the Hessians could have escaped. And in this brilliant achievement the Americans lost only two privates killed, two frozen to death, and two officers and four privates wounded. The whole scheme was as ingenious as it was executed with remarkable vigor. To Howe's startled senses it was as if some energetic apparition had risen from the dead.

The victory of Trenton turned the wheel of American destiny into a new light. Washington commended his officers and men in the warmest terms, pronouncing their conduct admirable without a solitary exception. He recrossed the Delaware into Pennsylvania with his prisoners, as Trenton in itself was of no account, and made immediate arrangements to follow up his success and drive the British back into New York. Before the last day of the year he had a second time crossed the Delaware with his forces, and all England was presently to look with amazement upon their own retreating legions. Lord Germain said, "Our hopes were blasted by that unhappy affair at Trenton."

The prisoners taken at Fort Washington were crammed into every available building in New York City at this moment, — churches, sugar-houses, stores, and jails. The Middle Dutch Church was stripped of its pulpit and pews, and nearly three thousand men, sick and well, were huddled indiscriminately within its walls.

On the 27th Congress passed a resolution investing Washington with such extraordinary military powers, that he was said in Europe to have been appointed "Dictator of America." These trusts were confided to him for six months, that he might enlist and organize an army which would have more solidity and permanence than the phantom he had hitherto attempted to control. The news reached him on the 29th. Dec. 29. The action of Congress authorizing the commissioners in France to borrow two millions sterling at six per cent for ten years, together with an order for the emission of five million dollars in paper on the faith of the United States, came to his knowledge also on the same date.

Genealogical note, continued from page 119.—Children of General JAMES CLINTON and MARY DE WITT: 1, Alexander, died unmarried; 2, Charles, married Elizabeth Mulliner; 3, De Witt, married 1st Maria Franklin, 2d Catherine Jones; 4, George, married Hannah Franklin; 5, Mary, married 1st Robert Burrage Norton, 2d Judge Ambrose Spencer; 6, Elizabeth, married William Stuart; 7, Katharine, married 1st Samuel Norton, 2d Judge Ambrose Spencer. By his second wife, Mrs. Mary Gray, General Clinton had four daughters and one son, James Graham Clinton, who married Margaret E. Conger.

Charles, second son of General James and Mary De Witt Clinton, had two daughters and one son, Dr. Alexander Clinton, who married Adeline Arden Hamilton, daughter of Alexander James Hamilton, the last Baron of Innerwich, Scotland. Children: 1, Mary E., married John Rhinelander Bleecker; 2, Adeline H., married Thomas E. Brown; 3, Alexander James, married 1st Sophie E. Vose, 2d Annie J. Nestell; 4, Anna E., married Thomas A. Wilmerding; 5, Catherine; 6, Charles William; 7, De Witt, married Elizabeth S. Burnham.

See page 119.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1777.

THE YEAR OF BATTLES.

MONEY. — VICTORY AT PRINCETON. — STARTLING ACHIEVEMENTS. — NEW JERSEY RECONQUERED BY WASHINGTON. — ARMY AT MORRISTOWN. — LORD STIRLING. — RAIDS. — BURNING OF DANBURY. — STORMING OF SAGG HARBOR. — CAPTURE OF GENERAL PRESCOTT. — CONSTITUTION OF NEW YORK. — AUGUSTUS JAY. — BATTLE OF SCOTCH PLAINS. — FALL OF TICONDEROGA. — BATTLE OF ORISKANY. — BATTLE OF BENNINGTON. — DISCUSSIONS IN PARLIAMENT. — LAFAYETTE. — THE NEW JERSEY GAZETTE. — OPENING OF THE SUPREME COURT OF NEW YORK. — BATTLE OF THE BRANDYWINE. — FALL OF PHILADELPHIA. — BATTLES OF SARATOGA. — BATTLE OF GERMANTOWN. — BURNING OF KINGSTON. — SURRENDER OF BURGOYNE. — VALLEY FORGE. — WEST POINT.

THE New Year dawned upon a great chieftain almost without an army. And yet many of the disbanding regiments, whose terms of enlistment expired with the old year, were so electrified with delight at the victory of Trenton, that they agreed with one voice to remain six weeks longer, without any stipulations of their own in respect to compensation. The grave question of how to pay off the troops agitated Washington at this moment beyond all others; he had pledged his own fortune, other officers had done the same, the paymaster was out of funds, the public credit was exhausted. Until the bills ordered by Congress could be executed, he was left penniless even of paper money. Robert Morris was in Philadelphia, at the head of a committee from Congress, and to him Washington wrote, December 30, "Borrow money while it can be done. No time, my dear sir, is to be lost." Very early on New Year's morning, writes Bancroft, Morris went from house to house in the Quaker City rousing people from their beds to borrow money; and before noon he sent Washington fifty thousand dollars.

While Washington was hurriedly reorganizing his army at Trenton, Cornwallis (who, about to sail for Europe when the news of Washington's master-stroke at Trenton reached Howe, had been sent back into New Jersey to repair the mischief wrought) was making ready at Princeton to

Hosted by Google

lead seven thousand veteran troops upon the devoted heroes. Of this Washington had timely notice. The cold of the past week had abated, and the roads were soft; thus the march of the British, which commenced on the morning of January 2, was painfully slow. And Jan. 2. they were delayed at various points by skirmishers. Leslie, with a brigade, was left at Maidenhead as a reserve. At Five Mile Run they encountered the brave Hand with his riflemen, who disputed every step henceforward until they reached Trenton. At Shabbakong Creek the column was embarrassed for two hours by Americans secreted within the woods on the sides of the road. When within a mile of Trenton, Greene met them with two field-pieces and six hundred or more musketeers, and held them in check for some time, then withdrew in good order. Late on that wintry afternoon Washington, mounted upon a white horse, placed himself in the rear, and threw the few troops remaining in the town across the bridge of the Assanpink, beyond which the main body of his army stood in admirable battle array, silent in their ranks, protected by batteries. The sight was imposing; it was nearly sundown, and fogs and exceptional darkness threatened. Cornwallis encamped his tired troops on the hill above, confident in having driven Washington into a situation from which he could not possibly escape, and with vigilant guards stationed along the little stream, went to sleep in anticipation of a desperate struggle on the morrow.

The American camp fires for more than half a mile along the opposite shore of the Assanpink, blazed and flickered, throwing a glare over the town; and ever and anon from this wall of flame rose flashes, as fresh heaps of fuel were added, illuminating the heavens for a great distance. The British sentries watched lazily, listening to the perpetual sound of digging near the bridge, where the Americans were apparently scrambling to throw up intrenchments, working the whole night long.

At daylight there was not a soul to be seen! The American army had vanished like a dissolving-view! Cornwallis could scarcely credit the evidence of his own eyes! Mounted officers tore madly through Jan. 3. the streets Where, oh, where was the foe they had come so far to fight? A distant rumbling like that of cannon in the direction of Princeton told of a twin achievement to that of the week before, which a distinguished foreign military critic has pronounced the best planned and executed military manœuvre of the eighteenth century. If possible, this attack upon Princeton, in its audacity and its inspiring results, excelled that of Trenton. Cornwallis was appalled lest Washington should reach and destroy the British magazines at New Brunswick! He broke up his camp and forthwith marched rapidly towards Princeton.

Hosted by Google

Washington, knowing the by-ways leading out of Trenton, the cross-cuts and the roundabout roads, had soon after dark silently removed the baggage of his army to Burlington. About midnight he had forwarded his troops in detachments by a circuitous route to Princeton. The weather changing suddenly to crisp cold, aided him materially in moving his artillery. The party left to deceive the enemy by maintaining fires and noise of labor performed their parts well, and with the early dawn hastened after the army. At sunrise Washington reached the outskirts of Princeton, and wheeled by a back road towards the colleges. Three British regiments had been left here, under marching orders for Trenton, and two of these had already started, one being about a mile in advance of the other. With each there was a sharp and severe conflict. In the first, near the bridge at Stony Brook, the lion-hearted General Mercer was killed. This was one of the moments when all the latent fire of Washington's character blazed forth. He rode squarely to the front, less than thirty yards from the enemy, reined in his horse, and waved his hat to cheer on his troops. Scarcely twenty minutes later the British were flying over the fences and fields, vigorously chased for three or four miles. Washington took Hitchcock by the hand and thanked him in the presence of the soldiers for his gallantry; and he also warmly complimented Hand for efficient services. Meanwhile Stark, Reed, and Stirling drove the other resisting regiments into the college buildings; from which, to escape certain capture, the majority fled through the fields into a back road in the direction of New Brunswick. Nearly three hundred surrendered, including fourteen officers; the British loss in killed was between two and three hundred. The American loss in numbers was small.

Washington would have proceeded instantly to New Brunswick but for the fatigue of his men, who had been in constant service two days and one night, without shelter and almost without refreshment. After breaking up the bridge at Kingston over the Millstone River, he marched toward the high mountain ridge, and halted for the night at Somerset Court-house. He reached Morristown on the 5th, and there, among the barriers of nature, established winter-quarters. But he did not sit down idle. He sent out detachments to assail and harass Cornwallis, and with such address were these expeditions conducted that the British commander was actually compelled to evacuate all his posts westward of New Brunswick, and concentrate his forces for the safety of his stores at that place. George Clinton, with troops from Peekskill, looked down upon Hackensack on the day that the army reached Morristown, and the British force fled from that point.

Jan. 5.

Taking advantage of the consternation of the enemy, Maxwell, with a

Hosted by Google

company of militia, suddenly descended from the Short Hills and drove the British out of Newark, had a skirmish with them at Springfield, compelled them to leave Elizabeth, and fought them at Rahway for two hours. On the 9th the British were fairly cooped up in New Brunswick and Amboy; and there they remained the rest of the winter, subject to constant alarms for their own safety. Not a stick of wood, a kernel of corn, or a spear of grass, could they procure without fighting for it, unless sent over from New York.

The glory of these startling achievements was rendered doubly conspicuous by their immediate effects. The army which was supposed to be on the verge of annihilation had in three weeks dislodged the flower of the British soldiery from every position it had taken, save two, in the whole province of New Jersey. The reaction of public sentiment was marvelous. Despondency was dispelled as by a charm. Washington's sagacity, intrepidity, and generalship were applauded both by friend and foe. The greatest personages of Europe lavished upon him praise and congratulation. He was compared to the renowned commanders of antiquity. Van Bulow writes, "The two events of Trenton and Princeton are sufficient to elevate a general to the temple of immortality." Botta, the Italian historian, says, "Achievements so astonishing gained for the American commander a very great reputation, and were regarded with wonder by all nations, as well as by the Americans." Horace Walpole, in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, said, "I look upon a great part of America as lost to this country."

When the people of New Jersey, who had fled to the mountains for safety upon the advent of the armies in December, ventured to return in January, they found their houses plundered, fences used for fire-wood, and gardens and grounds in open common. Those who had remained in their dwellings learned to their sorrow (as did the inhabitants of Long Island and Westchester) that neither neutrality nor loyalty protected them from barbarous and indiscriminate pillage. Churches were desecrated, libraries destroyed, and the furniture, clothing, and eatables of private families taken whenever want or inclination dictated, expostulation only resulting in wanton mischief — such as the breaking of glass or the ripping open of beds by which feathers were scattered to the four winds. Infancy, old age, and womanhood were brutally outraged. The Hessians bore the blame chiefly, but the English soldiery were scarcely less to be dreaded. The country rose against the invaders. Every foraging party sent out from New Brunswick was driven back with loss by such gallant leaders as Spencer, Maxwell, and Littell. Hundreds of skirmishes occurred before spring; individually unimportant per-

Hosted by Google

haps, and yet brilliant in their relations to the events which had gone before and were to follow in immediate succession.

Lord Stirling wrote to Governor Livingston, "Now is the time to exert every nerve." New Jersey in her great peril had no more efficient, faithful, and fearless champions than these two officers. Both were New-Yorkers by birth, education, and family interests. Stirling's wife was Livingston's sister. Stirling himself was the son of New York's famous lawyer, James Alexander, and a descendant of the De Peysters through his mother. Lady Mary, the elder of his two daughters, was married to Robert Watts, son of Counselor John Watts, and residing in New York at the present crisis, — her husband, however, taking no part on either side in the conflict. Stirling's country-seat was at Baskinridge, a few miles from Morristown, the house one of the finest in the State, fronting a spacious lawn, with gardens, fields, and a fine deer-park stretching off to the right and left. The stables and coach-houses were perhaps the most striking features of the estate, ornamented with cupolas and gilded weather-vanes, and encircling a large paved court in the rear. They sheltered the handsomest horses and the most stylish equipage at that time in the State.[1] Quiet homes in this mountainous region had been secured by many New York families. John Morton, styled the "Rebel banker" by the British, lived near Lord Stirling, and with this gentleman General Lee was to have breakfasted the very morning of his capture. Morton's daughter, Eliza Susan, then quite young, after-



Lord Stirling.

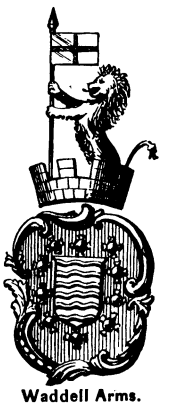
[1] Lord Stirling was in serious financial embarrassment, consequent in part from the costliness of his residence in England some years before, one of the incidents of which was his unsuccessful claim to the title and estates of the Earl of Stirling. Just prior to the Revolution, he obtained Legislative permission to sell his property by lottery, but the tickets had not yet found buyers when the confusion of affairs stopped proceedings. His lands known as the Cheesecocks, Richbills, Provoost, Hardenburgh, and Minisink Patents, in the counties of Orange, Ulster, Albany, and Westchester, with other real estate, were mortgaged to Mrs. Anna Waddell, one of the wealthiest citizens of New York City, of whom he had borrowed large sums of money, — which lands subsequently fell by foreclosure to the daughters of Mrs. Waddell, who married into the families of the Taylors and Winthrops. Mrs. Anna

Hosted by Google

wards married the distinguished scholar and statesman, Josiah Quincy. Mrs. Governor Livingston and her daughter were the guests of Lady Stirling the entire winter, hastily abandoning "Liberty Hall" when the enemy approached Elizabeth.

The governor was upon his horse daily, regardless of cold, fatigue, inclement weather, or personal danger. He convened the Legislature, and he conferred with Washington, attending to innumerable conflicting duties at various points between Trenton and Morristown. Washington issued mandates which Livingston emphasized relative to the suppression of lawless rapine among the American soldiers. The offer of full pardon to all inhabitants of New Jersey who would surrender their protection-papers to the nearest officer and swear allegiance to the United States, resulted in a considerable accession to the patriot ranks. But there were Quakers in Western New Jersey who fondly cherished the non-resistance doctrine, to the infinite embarrassment of the framers of the new militia laws of the State. Sharp lines were drawn between friends and foes, dividing families and scattering households, but the public safety demanded rigorous measures. Every man who was unwilling to take the oath was obliged to retire within the British limits. Upon the recommendation of Livingston, the Legislature finally, on the 5th of June, passed a bill confiscating the personal estates of all such as still adhered to the British interest. This provoked the bitterest hostility on the part of the refugees, notwithstanding the act provided a period of grace in which without loss of property they might renew their allegiance. Henceforward to the end

Waddell was the widow of John Waddell, the grandson of Captain John Waddell who, for great naval victories gained by him, was specially endowed by Charles II. "in perpetual remembrance of his glorious achievements, to him and his heirs male forever," with a coat of arms — ten fire-balls, etc., and a crest of a demi-lion rampant, out of the battlements of a castle, bearing a banner of St. George. John Waddell came from Dover, England, and was married in 1736 to the lady above mentioned, the ceremony taking place in the old Government House. The wedding chairs used on this occasion are still preserved in the family. (See page 191.) He was one of the first subscribers to the New York Society Library. After his death, Mrs. Waddell became one of the trustees, the only lady whose name appears in the Royal charter of that institution. Their eldest son, William Waddell, was an alderman during the Revolution, and a man of civil and social distinction. Henry, eldest son of William Waddell, married Eliza, the daughter of Lloyd Daubeny (entitled to the Peerage of Lord Daubeny) and Mary Coventry, a descendant of the Earls of Coventry. The eldest son of Henry and Eliza Daubeny Waddell, Coventry Waddell, who was United States Marshal under President Jackson, financial agent of the State Department under Secretaries Edward Livingston and John Forsyth, and subsequently Official and General Assignee in Bankruptcy for New York City, is now the only living representative of the three families of Daubeny, Coventry, and Waddell in this country.



Waddell Arms.

Hosted by Google

of the war these men were far more to be feared than the British or Hessian soldiers, as they were constantly fitting out expeditions into their old neighborhoods for revengeful murder and plunder. Their inroads were similar to the border forays in Scotland. They made sundry attempts to burn "Liberty Hall," and threatened the governor's life with fierce intent. His family removed in the early spring from Lord Stirling's home at Baskinridge to Percepany. On the night of July 27, while the governor was paying a flying visit to them, the house was surrounded by a band of refugees; but, knowing that gentlemen guests were within from whom they might not be able to distinguish their victim, they laid down in the grass waiting for daylight, and overslept themselves. When roused by the sunshine, Governor Livingston was galloping over the roads, miles away, to meet some important appointment, wholly unconscious of what he had escaped.

The right wing of Washington's army was at Princeton under Putnam, who had hardly as many men as miles of frontier to guard; the left wing was under Heath in the Highlands, and cantonments were established at various points along this extended line. Wooster, Scott, Lincoln, Parsons, McDougall, and Benedict Arnold were all in the Hudson River division, and were stationed at various times as far south as North Castle, New Rochelle, Dobb's Ferry, and even Kingsbridge, but nothing of importance transpired. Parties of the enemy prowled through the neighborhood of New York City for cattle, horses, hay, and grain, whenever it was practicable. In March, Colonel Bird, with a detachment of five hundred troops under a convoy of one frigate and some smaller vessels, suddenly appeared at Peekskill, where the magazines and stores of Heath were collected, and, driving McDougall with his small force from the town, captured a considerable amount of booty. Colonel Willett with sixty men dashed upon them before they had finished their business, with such vigor that they fled precipitately to their vessels. Heath was at the time in Massachusetts, having been appointed on the 14th to the command of the Eastern department.

March 23.

April was notable for the British raid upon Danbury, Connecticut, where the Americans had stored supplies and munitions of war. Tryon commanded the expedition, and was accompanied by Sir William Erskine and General Agnew, with two thousand men. They landed at Compo beach, just east of Norwalk, from twenty-five vessels, and marched twenty-two miles inland, reaching Danbury Saturday afternoon, April 26. The guard was too small for effective resistance, and withdrew. The inhabitants fled for safety into the country to the north and east. Sergeant Nathaniel Hoyt, of Washington's Continental Artil-

April 26.

Hosted by Google

lery,[1] chanced to be home on a furlough, and hastily removed his wife and young children to New Milford upon an ox-cart, passing out of the town just as the red-coated legions came in. His cousin, Comfort Hoyt, was less fortunate in escaping, his handsome horses being discovered by the invaders and taken from his wagon on the road. The families, suddenly abandoning their homes, took such valuables as they could carry, but the greater portion of their household goods were left to the mercy of the foe. The church was packed to the galleries with provisions in barrels, and several barns and other depositories were full to the roof; these were rolled into the street in a pile, and the torch applied. Eighteen hundred barrels of pork and beef, seven hundred barrels of flour, two thousand bushels of wheat, corresponding quantities of rye, oats, corn, and hay, and a large invoice of tents, were consumed, the smoke filling the air with a suffocating odor, and the melted pork running in streams through the streets. Rum was found and drank by the British soldiers, and the night was made hideous with their revelry. The country was aroused far and near. Wooster and Arnold were both in New Haven on furloughs, but were quickly speeding by a forced march to the rescue, and Silliman was on the wing. Late in the evening a flying messenger for aid reached Colonel Ludington in Carmel, New York, whose men were at

[1] Sergeant Nathaniel Hoyt, born 1750, was one of the rear-guard in the retreat from Long Island, and also from New York City (see page 127). He served in the Continental Army during nearly the whole period of the conflict. His home was in Danbury. He was descended in the direct line from Simon Hoyt, who came to Salem, Massachusetts, in 1628, with Governor Endicott, and who was one of the founders of seven different towns. He was of the party who traveled on foot from Salem through the woods to explore and settle Charlestown. In 1636 he was among the founders of Windsor, Connecticut, and a deacon in Rev. Thomas Hooker's church. He bought an extensive territory of land in Fairfield County, and with his sons aided in the settlement of Fairfield, Norwalk, Stamford, and Danbury, and also Deerfield, Massachusetts. His eldest son, Walter Hoyt (born 1618), was the fifth of the ten proprietors named in the instrument when Norwalk was incorporated in 1653, they having owned the land for twenty years. Walter's son, John Hoyt (born 1644), was one of the eight original proprietors of Danbury in 1685. John's son Benjamin had a son Nathaniel, who was the father of Sergeant Nathaniel Hoyt, whose son Nathaniel was a resident of Western New York, an honored and useful citizen, within the memory of the present generation. The Hoyts have intermarried with the Benedicts, Trowbridges, Fields, Nashes, Lockwoods, Welds, and other eminent families, and have held many offices of trust civil and military. Among the distinguished descendants, through their mother, Mary Hoyt, are John Sherman, present Secretary of the Treasury, and General William Tecumseh Sherman. The Deerfield branch of the Hoyts descended from Nicholas, the second son of Simon Hoyt of Windsor. Several generations of the family lived in the famous old Indian House in that town. General Epaphras Hoyt, historian and antiquarian writer (born 1765), was one of four brothers, all of whom were military officers and members of the legislature. Their sister married Justin Hitchcock, and was the mother of President Edward Hitchcock of Amherst College.

Hosted by Google

their homes scattered over the distance of many miles; no one being at hand to call them, his daughter Sibyl Ludington, a spirited young girl of sixteen, mounted her horse in the dead of night and performed this service, and by breakfast-time the next morning the whole regiment was on its rapid march to Danbury. But the mischief had been accomplished. The British, apprised of the approach of the Americans in the early morning of the 27th, burned all the dwelling-houses in the town, and retreated upon the Fairfield road towards the sound. Wooster, effecting a junction with Silliman, pursued and harassed them, and about noon a sharp fight was maintained for upwards of an hour, in which Wooster fell mortally wounded at the very moment while shouting, "Come on, boys, never mind such random shots!"[1] Arnold behaved with remarkable intrepidity; his horse was killed when within ten yards of the enemy, and a soldier leaped upon him with fixed bayonet, whom he instantly shot. The skirmishing continued until the whole force had re-embarked for New York. The enemy were so hotly pursued that they were only able to cross the Segatuck bridge by running at full speed. Their loss was between three and four hundred. General Agnew was among the wounded. Howe never considered the advantages gained by this exploit equal to the costs.

May was marked by an act of retaliation on the part of the Americans which evinced so much ability of plan and boldness of execution that the British generals were confounded. Parsons,[2] commanding in Con-

[1] Major-General David Wooster, born in Stratford, Connecticut, March 2, 1710, had been a valuable officer in the French War; but for twelve years prior to the Revolution was collector of the port of New Haven, and surrounded with all the comforts and elegances of wealth. His wife was the daughter of President Clapp of Yale College. His mansion in Wooster Street, then isolated among country scenes, had an unobstructed view of the beautiful bay of New Haven, and was the resort of the learning and polish of the time; his style of living, his bountiful table, his troupe of black domestics, his horses and his phaeton, were all in the highest elegance of the olden period. He was offered a high commission in the British army, which he spurned, and enrolled himself upon the side of America with the first knell of hostilities, drawing from his own ample fortune to equip and pay his officers and men. His death was deeply lamented.

[2] Samuel Holden Parsons was a lawyer, and one of the most scholarly writers of the Revolution. He was the son of Rev. Jonathan Parsons, pastor of the church in Lyme, Connecticut — afterwards at Newburyport, Massachusetts — a *protégé* of Rev. Jonathan Edwards, and the intimate friend of Whitfield. The mother of Samuel Holden Parsons was Phebe Griswold, the sister of Governor Matthew Griswold, and his wife was a Miss Mather, of Lyme, descended from the distinguished Boston Mathers. Ezra Lee, who experimented with Bushnell's machine for submarine navigation (see pages 98, 99), married a sister of Mrs. General Parsons. Inheriting brilliant qualities from both father and mother, carefully educated, and trained in legal lore by his accomplished uncle, Governor Matthew Griswold, General Parsons was well fitted for public life. He was admitted to the bar in 1759, when

Hosted by Google

necticut, sent Colonel Meigs to destroy the military stores and provisions which the enemy had collected at Sag Harbor. He sailed from New Haven May 21, with two hundred and thirty-four men in thirteen whale-boats, but the sea being rough anchored in Guilford harbor until the 23d; in the afternoon they crossed the sound undiscovered by the British cruisers with which it was alive, and at midnight landed, concealed their boats in the woods, and marched four miles. It was two o'clock in the morning when they reached and stormed Sag Harbor, destroying twelve vessels — brigs, schooners, and sloops, one of which was armed with twelve guns — one hundred tons of pressed hay, twelve hogsheads of rum, grain, merchandise, and other stores in immense quantities, and captured the whole guard of ninety men, carrying them across the sound to Connecticut. All this was accomplished without the loss of a man; and about noon on the 24th the victorious party arrived in Guilford, having been absent less than twenty-four hours. Meigs[1] was warmly complimented for his gallantry by Washington; and was voted (August 3) thanks and a sword by Congress. May 24.

Meanwhile the Convention of New York, long since elected for the express purpose of establishing a state government, had been tossed from place to place — meeting at White Plains, Harlem, Kingsbridge, Philipse Manor, Fishkill, and now at Kingston — its members performing every class of public duty. A committee was appointed August 1 (1776) to prepare and report a constitution, consisting of John Sloss Hobart, William Duer, General John Morin Scott, Colonel John Broome, Charles De Witt, William Smith, Henry Wisner, Samuel Townsend, Robert Yates, Abraham Yates, Robert R. Livingston, Gouverneur Morris, and John Jay, who was made the chairman. Such, however, was the critical urgency for energetic action in other directions, that no time was found for the completion of the task until the beginning of 1777. The shaping of the instrument fell chiefly to Jay, Livingston, and Morris. They were young men — Jay thirty-two, Livingston thirty, and Morris only twenty-five — each possessing the best education of the time, belonging to the wealthiest families in the State, and by birth and opportunity certain of Royal

twenty-two years of age, settled in Lyme, and was elected to the Assembly of Connecticut in 1762, and successively for eighteen sessions. After peace was restored he was appointed by Washington first judge of the Northwestern Territory.

[1] Return Jonathan Meigs was born in Middletown, Connecticut, in 1740; he belonged to one of the best families in New England, and was an officer of great ability. In 1788 he was one of the first settlers of Marietta, Ohio. His son, Return Jonathan Meigs, the distinguished jurist and statesman, was born in Middletown in 1765. He also settled in Marietta, was Chief Justice of the Ohio Superior Court in the early part of the present century, United States Senator from 1808 to 1810, and four years governor of Ohio.

Hosted by Google

favor should they choose otherwise than peril their lives for civil liberty and self-government. We shall see how they chose the latter. On the 12th of March the draft in the handwriting of Jay was first read to the Convention by James Duane. It was discussed by sections, and in all its bearings, until April 20, when it was adopted almost in its original form. It recites in full the Declaration of Independence, and the unanimous resolution of the Convention (9th July) instructing the New York delegates at Philadelphia to give it their support; and, providing for the naturalization of foreigners, for trial by jury, for a militia service with recognition of the Quakers, for the protection of Indians within the State limits, and for absolute religious liberty, it is equal in the scope of its provisions and in dignity of expression to any similar instrument ever prepared by the hand of man. We may well pause with wonder at the vigorous ease with which these government-makers wielded the public affairs of New York at the very moment when nearly every county within her borders was invaded by the enemy, her chief city captive, her vessels burned and her store-houses empty, and hostile forces gathering strength at the North for a descent with fire and sword upon the smiling valleys of the Hudson. The Empire State was the last of the thirteen colonies to frame an individual government, but when accomplished, in the face of greater dangers than overwhelmed any other, it excelled them all in the largeness of its humane liberality.

April 20.

The Constitution was published on Tuesday, April 22, the church-bell calling the people of Kingston together at eleven o'clock in the morning. Vice-President Van Cortlandt, with the members of the Convention, appeared in front of the court-house, and the secretary, Robert Benson, mounted upon a barrel, read the immortal document to the assembled multitude. Three thousand copies were immediately printed for distribution by John Holt, at Fishkill.

April 22.

The committee appointed to report a plan for organizing the government were John Jay, Robert R. Livingston, Gouverneur Morris, General John Morin Scott, Abraham Yates, and John Sloss Hobart. Before its adjournment this remarkable Convention empowered fifteen of its number to govern the State until an election could be held for governor, lieutenant-governor, legislature, etc. It was called the Council of Safety, and wielded an absolute sovereignty. The judicial power was vested by the Constitution in a chancellor and judges of the Supreme Court; local county courts and a probate judiciary were constituted; while a final appellate court, both in law and equity, was to be formed by the senate, the chancellor, and the judges of the Supreme Court. For the immediate execution of the laws, Robert R. Livingston was elected chancellor, John

Hosted by Google



"Vice-President Van Cortlandt with the Members of the Convention appeared in front of the Court-house, and the Secretary, Robert Benson, mounted upon a barrel, read the immortal document to the assembled multitude." **Page 162.**

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google

Jay chief justice. Robert Yates[1] and John Sloss Hobart[2] judges of the Supreme Court, and Egbert Benson[3] attorney-general. Each county was provided with judicial officers, that the courts so long closed might be reopened. The first judge for the county of Albany was Volkert Peter Douw, and the other judges were Jacob C. Ten Eyck, Abraham Ten Broeck, Henry Bleecker, Walter Livingston, and John A. Ten Eyck. For Dutchess County, Ephraim Paine, Zephaniah Platt, and Anthony Hoffman were elected; for Ulster County, Levi Pawling and Dirck Wyncoop. May 3.

The day following was Sunday. But there was no rest for the weary legislators. Three commissioners were appointed, John Jay, Colonel Henry Ludington, and Colonel Thomas, to quell and subdue insurrections and disaffection in the counties of Dutchess and Westchester, and directed to co-operate with Robert R. Livingston, Zephaniah Platt, and Matthew Cantine (the committee for a like purpose in the manor of Livingston), and to call aid from the militia of George Clinton and McDougall whenever needful. The commissioners were also commanded to use every means in their power (torture excepted) to compel the discovery of spies or other emissaries of the enemy.

John Jay declined the nomination for governor.[4] The office was bestowed upon George Clinton, who was elected in June and inaugurated July 30. Pierre Van Cortlandt, as president of the Council of Safety and of the new senate, became lieutenant-governor of the State.

Before the end of May Washington had formed his plans for the disposal of his army in such a manner that the widely separated parts might reciprocally aid each other. It was supposed that Burgoyne, who was now in command of the British forces at the North, would endeavor to take Ticonderoga and penetrate the Hudson, and that Howe would either attack the Highlands or Philadelphia. As a convenient point from which to move as soon as the enemy's intentions were further developed,

[1] Robert Yates was born in Schenectady, New York, Jan. 27, 1738. Received a classical education in New York City, became a lawyer, and was admitted to the bar in Albany in 1760. He was a jurist and statesman of distinction; was chief justice of the State from 1790 to 1798.

[2] John Sloss Hobart was born in Fairfield, Connecticut, in 1738; he was the son of the eminent Fairfield clergyman, Rev. Noah Hobart, and had been carefully educated in every phase of ancient and modern lore. After the war he was one of the three judges of the Supreme Court of New York; and was also United States Senator from New York.

[3] Egbert Benson, who subsequently held a high rank in jurisprudence and in letters, was then thirty years of age. He was born in New York City, June 21, 1746, and was one of the early graduates of King's (Columbia) College.

[4] The intellect, character, culture, and social distinction of John Jay, and the prominence

Hosted by Google

Washington advanced from Morristown to the ridge of strong and commanding heights in the rear of Plainfield and Scotch Plains, where from the rocks in front of his camp he could look down upon the Raritan, the road to Philadelphia, and a considerable portion of the country between Amboy and Trenton. Sullivan was at Princeton, and Lord Stirling, Greene, and other officers were upon the plains which intervened between the main army and New Brunswick. Arnold was with Mifflin in Philadelphia,

with which he figured in our national development, leads us to penetrate beneath the surface of historical narrative for further light respecting his origin and the influences under which he was reared. To the Huguenot movement, which brought so much of the best blood of France to our shores, America is indebted for this great jurist and statesman. His grandfather, Augustus Jay, came to New York in 1686, when twenty-one years of age. He was the son of Pierre Jay, of La Rochelle; he was born March 23, 1665, and at the age of fourteen was sent to England for his education. He was absent in 1685, on an exploring expedition to the coast of Africa, when his father's family found refuge from persecution in England. (See Vol. I. 696, 697.) He came to New York, and obtained letters of denization from Governor Dongan on the 4th of March. While on a voyage to Hamburg in 1692, he was captured by pirates, but effected his escape, and reached La Rochelle, France, where he was secreted by his mother's sister, Madame Mouchard, and embarked on a vessel for Denmark; from there he proceeded to Plymouth, England, and visited his father's family. His brother Isaac was in the Huguenot regiment which fought so bravely for William III., under Count Schomberg, and died from wounds received at the battle of the Boyne. His sister Frances married Stephen Pelaquin of Bristol, England, whose son David was afterwards mayor of Bristol. Returning to New York, Augustus Jay married, in 1697, Anna Maria, daughter of Balthazar Bayard. He was a man of unblemished character, and possessed all the graces and accomplishments which distinguished the French of that period; his wealth and scholarship, together with his fine presence and engaging manners, rendered him one of the notable personages of his time. His son, Peter, born in 1704, and educated in Europe, who married Mary Van Cortlandt, was the father of John Jay, residing in the evening of his life in Rye, New York.



Augustus Jay,
Born at La Rochelle, France, March 23, 1665, died at New York, Nov. 16, 1756.
[From the portrait in the possession of Miss Eliza Clarkson Jay.]

Hosted by Google

preparing for its defense. Howe's object was the Quaker City, and he evidently preferred the straight route across New Jersey; the demonstration was made, on the 13th of June, of being about to force his way, but he was so harassed by small parties without drawing Washington into a general engagement, that he suddenly retreated to Amboy and began to pass his troops over to Staten Island. To cover the light parties detached to injure the British, Washington moved with the main army to Quibbletown, the van under Stirling proceeding to the Metuchen meeting-house, with orders to act according to circumstances, but in no case to bring on a general engagement. Howe wheeled suddenly about, recalling his troops from Staten Island, and on the night of the 25th marched in two columns for the heights and passes on the American left. Washington received timely intelligence and fell back to his stronghold at Middlebrook. During this retrograde movement, Stirling encountered the British right column under Cornwallis, and a spirited engagement ensued at Scotch Plains; but he joined Washington upon the heights without severe loss. Upon the brow of the mountain in the rear of Plainfield is a bold projecting rock, at an elevation of four hundred feet, where tradition says Washington often stood during these five days, taking observations. Baffled in his main design, Howe withdrew from New Jersey. On the 30th he embarked with sixteen thousand troops, the fleet prepared apparently for a long voyage.

June 26.

June 30.

The purposes of Howe were inexplicable to Washington. According to the science of war he would naturally aim to effect a junction with Burgoyne, who was marching with a strong force against Ticonderoga; and his route would be the smiling valley of the Hudson. Therefore the American posts in the Highlands were strengthened. But the fleet, after lolling in the hot July sun for two weeks, finally disappeared from New York harbor, and Washington must needs make Philadelphia his principal care. He moved his main army to Germantown, and conferred with Congress, which had returned to Philadelphia.

In the interim a brilliant achievement raised the spirits of the army. The British General Prescott commanded in Rhode Island, and was quartered in a house about five miles from Newport. Colonel William Barton, an intrepid young officer from Providence, learned the situation through a deserter, and with forty men rowed across Narragansett Bay in the dead of night, July 10, passed three frigates unobserved, landed noiselessly and stole along three fourths of a mile to headquarters, passing the general's guard not two hundred yards from his window, seized the sentry, burst into the house, and reached Prescott's door before an alarm could be given; as this was not opened instantly

July 10.

Hosted by Google

on demand, the colored guide broke in the panels with his head, and Barton, springing forward, saw a man sitting up in bed. "Are you General Prescott?" he asked. "I am, sir," was the reply. "You are my prisoner," said Barton. "I acknowledge it," replied Prescott. Silence was compelled, and the humiliated general was hurried, undressed, into the night-fog, over a fence, and through a rye-field where blackberry briers prevailed, much to his discomfort; he was desired to run, but he said he was an old man and could not. Therefore a strong hand taking him under the arm on each side enabled him to run. "Gentlemen, do you mean to kill me?" he exclaimed. "No, we mean to exchange you for General Lee, and after that we do not care how soon the devil has you," was the reply. They reached the boats and rowed back the same way they came, passing the men-of-war and forts undiscovered. When they were nearing Warwick Neck, fire rockets and alarm-guns revealed the consternation upon the island. A flag was sent in the morning for the general's clothes.

This admirably conducted enterprise furnished Washington the means of exchanging an officer of equal rank with Lee, which was accomplished in due course of events. Had Lee's character been as well understood then as now he would not have been wanted by the Americans at any price. He had been busy, while Congress and Washington were tenderly guarding his interests and striving for his release, in writing out and presenting to Lord and General Howe an elaborate plan for reducing the Americans. The evidence of this treason, the document itself, dated March 29, 1777, has been discovered and given to the world by the eminent scholar, George H. Moore.[1] Lee commanded little respect in the British mind, and his counsels were in the main unheeded. If he influenced in any slight degree the southern movement of the Howes, they had less reason than before to honor his military judgment.

Swiftly following the capture of Prescott came tidings of the loss of that enchanted castle in popular imagination, Ticonderoga. It had been invested by Burgoyne; and evacuated by General St. Clair on the night of July 5th. The indefatigable exertions and appeals of Schuyler for an increase of military strength were counteracted by the intrigues of Gates; Schuyler had even been displaced, at the very moment when Burgoyne's splendidly appointed army was crossing the ocean, and it was late in May before he was restored to the command. The peril then was close at hand, and it was impossible to collect men; thus the garri-

[1] *Treason of Major-General Charles Lee*, by George H. Moore; *Bancroft's Hist. United States; F. Moore's Loyalist Poetry of the Revolution; Shaw to Elliot*, March 4, 1777; *Sir Joseph Yorke to the Foreign Office*, March 7, 1777; *DeLancey's Notes to Jones's History*, Vol. I. 672; *Watson's Annals of Philadelphia.*

Hosted by Google

son was totally inadequate for the defense of the position against such a brilliant pageant as swept over the historic waters of Lake Champlain on the 1st of July. The importance of this fortress was overestimated both in England and America, as proven by subsequent events. Still the people of New York, having regarded it as the bulwark of their safety, were terror-stricken, not knowing whither to fly. They feared the savages more than the British, and the Hessians more than the savages; and the forests were swarming with wildcats and wolves. The Tories were jubilant. And when the news reached England the king rushed into the queen's apartment, exclaiming, "I have beat them, I have beat all the Americans!" Even Lord Germain announced the fall of Ticonderoga in Parliament, as if it had been decisive of the fate of the colonies.

The Council of Safety at Kingston sent Gouverneur Morris and Abraham Yates immediately to Schuyler's headquarters at Fort Edward, to confer as to the most efficient measures for the protection of the State. They encountered rumors of disaster and depredation at the North and West which were appalling. They found Schuyler hopeful amid his perplexities, hastening to assemble his army at Moses Creek, five miles from hence, and employing scores of brave men in the woods to fell trees across the road, letting them drop from both sides, their branches mingling; they tumbled trees into the fordable rivers, and interposed every other obstacle which ingenuity could devise to embarrass Burgoyne; at the same time cattle were driven beyond his reach, and bridges and saw-mills destroyed. Within the twenty-one miles which he must needs march to reach Fort Edward, the country was so broken with streams or swamps that he was obliged to construct not less than forty bridges, one of which, a log-work over a morass, was two miles long. It was a wet season, and when dry was not a pleasant land to journey through. But the exceptional difficulties at which Burgoyne stood aghast were the result of Schuyler's sagacity. Brockholst Livingston, son of Governor Livingston of New Jersey (afterwards a judge residing in New York City), then twenty years of age, was Schuyler's most efficient aide-de-camp, and was constantly conveying orders through the woods; Matthew Clarkson, Livingston's cousin, joined Schuyler's staff at this point. The committee thought that Schuyler, from being personally acquainted with the passes and defiles, might with suitable aid effectually defeat Burgoyne.

But all eyes having been turned towards Ticonderoga as the Gibraltar of the Americans, its abandonment caused a panic of alarm and disappointment. The voice of censure against its commanders resounded from one end of the continent to the other, and was industriously sustained by Gates and those whom he had won over to his interests. Both

Hosted by Google

Schuyler and St. Clair were accused of military negligence, and even of complicity with the enemy. Party spirit, fomented by jealousies of long standing, deafened the public ear to the true reasons of the case, — or their palliating circumstances. Time and investigation proved that St. Clair had acted the part of a judicious and skillful officer. And the vista of a century reveals Schuyler's wisdom, integrity, breadth of vision, and nobility of character, in a light which will radiate undimmed in all the future. He was the real conqueror of Burgoyne, and thereby rendered services to the country second only to those of Washington in importance and extent. He had the sympathy of the New York government and the confidence of Washington through all his trials; Congress, slighting the very authority it had bestowed upon Washington so recently, sent Gates to supersede Schuyler, to whom the latter gave, upon his arrival in camp August 19, the cordial reception of a soldier and a gentleman.[1]

But thrilling events had transpired ere Gates, with the powers and the aid hitherto entreated by Schuyler in vain, reached his destination. The storm had broken upon Central New York. News passed like a whirlwind through the Mohawk Valley that St. Leger with picked soldiers, accompanied by Sir John Johnson and his Royal Greens, and Brandt at the head of one thousand Indians, were coming eastward from Lake Ontario down the Mohawk River — and it was said they had offered twenty dollars for every American scalp. It was a terrible hour. The country was roused with horror. Sir John Johnson was known to be a powerful leader of men. He possessed the magnetism which inspired devotion. His regiment was composed of his kinsmen, neighbors, and tenants. Even his slaves were provided with weapons ready to obey his slightest nod. He was both a knight and a baronet. His princely domain was here, stretching off beyond the horizon; broader and more valuable than any other private estate in the colonies, save perhaps those of William Penn and Lord Fairfax. After he broke his parole and went through the woods into Canada, his wife, Mary Watts, daughter of Councilor John Watts, a lady of great beauty, was taken to Albany as a hostage for his good behavior. She was allowed to reside with a venerable aunt, accompanied by her sister and children, but given to understand that if her husband appeared in arms against the Americans, or if she attempted to escape, she would be the victim of retaliation. The following November she

[1] *The Burgoyne Campaign*, by John Austin Stevens; *Lord Mahon's History of England*, *Major-General Philip Schuyler and the Burgoyne Campaign*, by General John Watts de Peyster; *Bancroft's Hist. United States; Central New York in the Revolution*, by Douglass Campbell; *Burgoyne's Surrender*, by William L. Stone; *Address of* Horatio Seymour; *Oration* by George William Curtis; *DeLancey's Notes to Jones's History of New York; Stedman; Lossing; Sparks; Irving.*

Hosted by Google

applied to the Convention for permission to go to New York, which was denied; but she was allowed to take up her abode with the family of Cadwallader Colden, at Coldenham, in Ulster County. The first thing she did was to send a trusty messenger to Johnson Hall, for one of Sir John's tenants to come to her with a sleigh and a pair of good horses. The man appeared as directed, and her ladyship and sister, Miss Watts, disguised in servants' dresses, started in the evening, traveling all night, and reached Paulus Hook next morning, where Sir John, who was in New York City, received and provided for her. Thus no restraint could now be imposed upon Sir John's movements, since his family were safe under British protection, and he plunged into the strife with a bitterness scarcely to be equaled. And he was as brave and energetic as he was vindictive. Jones says that he did more mischief to the rebel settlements upon the frontiers of New York than all the partisans in the British service put together.

The inhabitants of the region, who paled with terror at the approach of this foe, were nearly all patriots, the Tories having either followed Sir John, otherwise escaped, or been imprisoned by the existing authorities. On the site of Rome stood Fort Stanwix, the garrison commanded by Colonel Peter Gansevoort, a young officer of twenty-eight, cool and resolute, aided by the bold and experienced Marinus Willett. The militia of Tryon County were quickly assembled to aid in its defense, and eight hundred, led by General Nicholas Herkimer, chairman of the County Committee of Safety, were hastening to the fort on the dark, hot, sultry summer morning of August 6; when within six miles (and two miles west of the Oriskany Creek, which is some eight miles from Utica), they were obliged to cross a bog and small stream in a ravine, by a primitive corduroy road, and found themselves all at once in a deadly ambush prepared by Sir John Johnson, who had been notified of their movements by the sister of Brandt. Here in this deep defile for six doubtful, desperate hours, without lines, or fort, or artillery, hand to hand, with knife and rifle, with tomahawk and spear, swaying and struggling, slipping in blood and stumbling over the dead and dying, raged the most bloody battle of the seven years' war for American Independence — and, indeed, of all modern history. After the smoke cleared from the first exchange of rifle-shots, the hollow became a whirlpool of vengeance; neighbors and kinsmen recognized as they slew each other; even brothers with uplifted spears rushed into deadly embrace. The Indians were crazed with the horrible scene and slaughtered indiscriminately. With the first volley Herkimer was mortally wounded and his horse killed; but, ordering his saddle to the foot of a tree against which he could lean for support, he calmly

Aug. 6.

Hosted by Google

directed his troops. There were no Briton born soldiers, no Hessians, no professional fighters in this combat, but New York men, children of the soil almost exclusively, kindred struggling with kindred for supremacy. The courage exhibited on both sides was marvelous. Sir John's brother-in-law, Stephen Watts of New York City, a gallant young officer of twenty-two, who led the advance-guard of the enemy from Oswego, was pierced many times with a bayonet, and lost one of his limbs, but was found alive three days after the battle and conveyed to camp by Sir John's Indians. He recovered. Colonel Willett sallied from the fort and vigorously attacked the main army of St. Leger, which diversion enabled the militia to beat off the adversary. But, alas! full four hundred were dead or wounded, including many leading and influential men. St. Leger wrote to Burgoyne that almost all the principal movers of the rebellion in Tryon County were among the slain. There was scarcely a habitation in the Mohawk Valley that was not in mourning for the loss of father, husband, brother, or son. Never had militia, caught in a trap, defended themselves with more valor, or died to better ulterior advantage for their country. Willett's exploit, without losing a man, resulted in bringing into the fort twenty or more wagon-loads of captured articles, including the gala fur robes and blankets of the Indians, and five English flags which were triumphantly displayed before evening on the flag-staff directly beneath the first "stars and stripes" ever unfurled under the Act of Congress of June 14. This pioneer United States banner was a curious piece of needlework, the white stripes having been cut out of ammunition shirts, the blue stripes fashioned from a camlet cloak which Willett had taken from the enemy at Peekskill in March, and the red stripes made of stuff contributed by one and another of the garrison. St. Leger was stunned by the obstinacy of the resistance, and Albany began to seem to him a great way off. He invested the fort, but the Indians had lost, with eighty or more of their number, including several favorite chiefs, their taste for fighting, and hearing that Arnold, sent by Schuyler, was coming up the valley with "thousands of men," they robbed the British officers of their clothes, plundered the stores, and ran away. St. Leger's forces were demoralized, and he finally retraced his steps to Canada. The blood of Central New York was not shed in vain; the sacrifice rendered Burgoyne's right arm powerless.

Before Burgoyne learned the fate of St. Leger, he sent (August 11) an expedition to capture an American depot of supplies at Bennington; it was commanded by Colonel Baum, and consisted of five hundred Hessians, a select corps of British marksmen, a numerous party of Tories, and a hundred or more Indians. But they never reached Bennington. New

Hosted by Google

England was as belligerent as New York had been at Stanwix. The hero, John Stark, was a favorite commander, although not at this time holding any commission, and the militia of New Hampshire sprang from their summer work at his call. Anticipating Burgoyne's measure, he had reached Bennington on the 9th, William Whipple, a signer of the Declaration of Independence from Maine, commanding one of the accompanying brigades. The news of the enemy's approach brought out the militia from every quarter. Berkshire was all activity. Parson Allen came from Pittsfield in his chaise, and complained because Stark did not begin the conflict in the midst of a heavy rain on the 15th. "If the Lord shall once more give us sunshine," exclaimed Stark in reply, "and I do not give your men of Berkshire fighting enough, I 'll never ask you to come out again." That same day the Indians began to desert Baum. They said the woods were "full of Yankees." He had intrenched upon an eminence, within sight of the Bennington steeples some seven miles distant, upon the soil of Hoosac, New York. And dripping in the storm, harassed with uncertainty about the tactics of the Americans, irritated by the conduct of his savage allies, and subjected to the perpetual stings of skirmishing parties, his situation was anything but enviable. On the 16th Stark skillfully surrounded the whole British force, attacking upon every side simultaneously at a given signal; the farmers swept up the hill with fiery and resistless fury, seized the blazing guns, drove the veteran troops as if they were wild animals threatening their homes, and became masters of the field. As they swarmed over the breastworks Baum attempted to cut his way out, but fell mortally wounded, and his worn-out troops surrendered. The contest lasted two hours; then came a brief lull and a reinforcement from Burgoyne, which had occupied thirty hours in marching twenty-four miles, and the onset was renewed, Colonel Seth Warner aiding Stark with a fresh regiment from Bennington. The second fight raged until sunset, when the foe retreated upon a run, chased by the Americans until quite dark. The arms, artillery, and ammunition-wagons captured were of special value at this crisis. The prisoners in the hands of Stark numbered seven hundred, while the loss of the British was over two hundred in killed and wounded. The Americans lost less than one hundred. It was a victory which quickened the pulse of the nation; a victory won upon the soil of New York by the sons of New England, and which rendered the left arm of Burgoyne powerless.

Aug. 16.

It was now that the haughty Burgoyne, who had airily boasted in London that with an army of ten thousand men he could promenade through America, found himself brought to a halt. He saw that he had

Hosted by Google

been deceived as to the sentiment of the country. He discovered that the Indians were irresponsible beings, and like spoiled children grew more unreasonable and importunate with every new favor. And he learned the unwelcome truth that while within forty-seven miles of the chief town of a great agricultural region he must look to Canada for his daily food; it was almost a month before he had accumulated supplies necessary for any further advance. And these triumphs had all been accomplished before Gates assumed command of the Northern department.

The outlook of the British campaign of 1777 had been interesting upon paper. Burgoyne was to move southward by Lake Champlain, Howe northward by the Hudson River, and St. Leger eastward from Lake Ontario. They were to meet at Albany. The whole strength of the English nation was aimed at the heart of New York. The fleets, the armies, and the savage allies were to follow converging lines and unite in the final blow. The study of America had convinced England that New York, physically as well as morally, was the great objective point to be conquered. That, once in possession of the stronghold of her commanding system of mountains and valleys, the American rebellion would be crushed.

In the session of Parliament from the 31st of October, 1776, to the 6th of June, 1777, America was the principal topic of discussion. Opinions clashed perpetually. Lord Rockingham in one house wished rather to give up America and embrace her as an ally than to carry on so destructive a war. Lord Cavendish in the other declared the war useless and unjust, and the conduct of it ineffectual, barbarous, and inhuman. Lord Sandwich was for forcing the Americans to submit even to the last drop of their blood. Lord Shelburne was not afraid to declare that America was justifiable in her resistance from the beginning. Another member described the Americans as a cowardly banditti who talked loudly, and ran lustily when faced by men of courage. Fox called the affair of Long Island "terrible," and saw nothing in it worthy of triumph. In relation to the bill empowering His Majesty to secure and detain persons charged with or suspected of high treason committed in North America, he cried out, "Who knows but the ministers in the fullness of their malice may take it into their heads that I have served on Long Island under General Washington?" "Our own liberties are in danger," exclaimed Wilkes. The Duke of Grafton expressed day by day the most marked abhorrence of the course pursued against America. Edmund Burke would have made peace on any terms. In the early part of May, 1777, David Hartley advised a measure in the shape of an address to the king "to rescue the honor of England from being brought to disgrace by the attempt of impossibilities." It was in substance to make a gift of independence to America, while

Hosted by Google

England might be said to have anything in her power to give. He urged for an immediate suspension of hostilities. In his opinion America was the rising world, which would in a few years be multiplied an hundredfold, and her friendship was worth preserving. He warned Parliament of the misrepresentations or ignorance of the ministry as to the general sense of the people of America, and predicted certain defeat and disasters, with an enormous waste of public money. A few days before the session terminated (May 30) Lord Chatham, after two years of sickness and seclusion, came to the House of Lords, wrapped in flannels, to lift his voice once more against this mad and impracticable war. "You cannot conquer the Americans," he said. "Your powerful forces may ravage; they cannot conquer. I might as well talk of driving them before me with this crutch! You have sent too many to make peace, too few to make war. We are the aggressors. We have invaded them. We have tried for unconditional submission; try what can be gained now by unconditional redress." His motion was for the redress of all American grievances, and the right of Americans to dispose of their own property. The debate which ensued called forth the highest energies of both contending parties. But the motion was lost. The ministry had already obtained the vote of Parliament for one hundred thousand men and ten millions of money. David Hartley wrote: "Coercion, and not conciliation, was from the very first the secret and adopted plan. The decisive periods were during the first three sessions of this Parliament; the first, opening in November, 1774, laid the foundation of the war, the other two threw away the pearl of peace, when it was in their hands, and drove America to the irrevocable extremities of independence and foreign alliance."[1]

The arrogant ministry, who had uniformly withheld every document of information from Parliament, watched the moves on their great American chess-board with exultant pride. The failure of St. Leger was hushed into silence. Lord Germain through sheer negligence omitted to sign and send the explicit orders for Howe's movements, which had been prepared, but which were found in the minister's office in London late in the Autumn.[2] Had this fact been known at the time, the mystery of Howe's ocean dance about the capes of Delaware while the king's forces at the North were in such dire peril would not have been so difficult of solution. Howe had resolved to take Philadelphia by sea, and a circuitous route had wasted nearly the whole month of August; he finally landed at the Head of Elk on the 25th, farther from the Quaker City than he was in June, while at New Brunswick. Here he recruited his

Aug. 25.

[1] *Hartley's Letters on the American War*, 3, 31; *Parl. Hist.*

[2] *Fonblanque's Burgoyne*, 232, 233.

Hosted by Google

army for several days, permitting an indiscriminate plunder not only of horses, cattle, and sheep, but of everything else that fell in the way of the soldiers, without distinction of Whigs and Tories.

Meanwhile the Marquis de Lafayette, with the veteran Baron de Kalb, and ten other French officers seeking service, arrived in Philadelphia by the way of the Carolinas, creating no little sensation. The romance attending the manner in which this rich young nobleman had baffled every obstacle to reach and offer his services to America as a volunteer without pay, made him an object of interest alike to the army and to the world. He was less than twenty years of age, the husband of a beautiful woman, a daughter of the illustrious house of Noailles, himself of high birth, and with ample means for every luxury. While preparing in secret a vessel for his voyage, he visited London, where his kinsman, the Marquis of Noailles, was ambassador. He was presented to King George and graciously received. He also met Sir Henry Clinton at the opera, who had come home on a winter leave of absence. And he declined an invitation to visit the naval armament at Portsmouth, as, mindful of his own hostile designs, he did not deem it proper to pry into the military forces of the kingdom. His first introduction to Washington was at a dinner-party in Philadelphia which included several members of Congress; before they separated Washington invited him to become a member of his military family, which invitation was gratefully accepted. Through him Washington learned more clearly the temper of France. Franklin's visit had produced a profound impression. The amiable Louis XVI. hesitated about involving the nation in another war with England, but it was generally understood that the United States would receive secret succors and warlike stores.

John Jay and Gouverneur Morris traveled to and from Philadelphia during the hot days of August; tarrying a few hours in Percepany, New Jersey, where Mrs. Jay and her infant son, Peter Augustus, were spending the summer months with the family of her father, Governor Livingston. They were obliged to journey with the utmost caution, as marauding expeditions from New York and Staten Island were prowling continually on the Jersey shores and far into the country. Sullivan, who had been left with his command when Washington quitted the State, attempted retaliation by crossing with a force of one thousand to Staten Island, August 22, of which Aaron Ogden and Frederick Frelinghuysen were conspicuous officers, and captured two loyalist regiments from New Jersey, with eleven officers. The prisoners were sent off in a prize vessel; but the American rear-guard was attacked before they could re-embark, and after an obstinate conflict forced to surrender; the loss was one hundred and sixty-

Hosted by Google

two. Sullivan found orders, when he regained his camp, to join Washington, who, parading his army decked with sprays of green through the streets of Philadelphia on the 24th, proceeded to the highlands beyond Wilmington, to meet Howe on his route to Philadelphia. On the 25th, General Francis Nash, brother of Governor Abner Nash of North Carolina, with his brave North Carolinians, marched also through the streets of Philadelphia and joined Washington. Meanwhile Sir Henry Clinton, retaliating upon Sullivan, sallied out of New York with three thousand troops and overran a considerable portion of the eastern section of New Jersey, causing much alarm and distress, robbing and insulting the inhabitants and seizing their valuable live stock. With the uprising of the militia he returned to the city with slight loss. The details of these outrages were published in the American newspapers, frequently magnified, but with sufficient foundation in truth to alienate any people from the perpetrators. Governor Livingston had already begun to make his pen useful in the cause of America; and to counteract the effects of Rivington's loyalist paper in New York, he aided Isaac Collins in establishing *The New Jersey Gazette* at Burlington, which, removing from town to town as policy or prudence dictated, continued throughout the war the leading vehicle of information in this State. Livingston's essays, through their bold reasoning and scoffing ridicule of kingly threats, did more to prevent vacillation and fear, and convince the New Jersey patriots that ultimate success on the part of Great Britain was impossible, than any other agency. And while he was presiding over the Council of Safety, sometimes at Trenton, sometimes at Morristown, and anywhere in the mountains or woods between, his bright and gifted daughters wrote his caustic articles for him.



John Jay.

[From a portrait in the possession of his grandson, Hon John Jay.]

Hosted by Google

On the 9th of September, two days before Howe met Washington below Philadelphia, while Burgoyne was moving slowly down upon Albany from the North like a terrible cloud, and Sir Henry Clinton was menacing the Hudson River passage to form a junction with him — shortly to reduce the building where the scene occurred, together with the whole village, to ashes — John Jay, the first chief justice of the new State of New York, opened its supreme court in Kingston, charging the grand jury that the people of New York had chosen their Constitution under the guidance of reason and experience, and that the highest respect had been made to those great and equal rights of human nature which should ever remain inviolate in every society. "You will know," he said, "no power but such as you create, no laws but such as acquire all their obligations from your consent. The rights of conscience and private judgment are by nature subject to no control but that of the Deity, and in that free situation they are now left." He stood in his robes, this tall, straight, slight, self-poised young man, a power more formidable than fleets and armies, as he uttered these lofty ideas, declaring that "Divine Providence had made the tyranny of princes instrumental in breaking the chains of their subjects." On the 10th, George Clinton, the first governor, met the first legislature of the new State at Kingston, and its noble Constitution received the first principles of life.

Sept. 9.

And just across the borders, in Connecticut, during the same hour of threatened calamity at every point of the compass, the clergymen who comprised the corporation of Yale College elected a new president. There is something almost sublime in the calm, business-like faith of this action, in the midst of the tumults which affected all colleges, and with the picture before their eyes of Nassau Hall, at Princeton, used as barracks above and a stable below, and its fine library, the gift of Governor Belcher, scattered to the four winds by the enemy. These clerical trustees were established over parishes in different parts of the State. They were the Reverends Eliphalet Williams, Warham Williams, Moses Dickinson, John Trumbull, Moses Mather, Eliezer Goodrich, Samuel Lockwood, Mr. Pitkin, Nathaniel Taylor,[1] Mr. Beckwith, and the accom-

[1] The Rev. Nathaniel Taylor was pastor of the church in New Milford, in the northwestern part of Connecticut, adjoining Dutchess County, New York. He was a trustee of Yale College twenty-six years, a pastor fifty years. He was a famous Hebrew scholar, ranked high in the pulpit, and possessed a fine graceful figure and a magnificent voice. He served as chaplain to a Connecticut regiment of troops, and remitted one year's salary to aid his people in their contributions to the war. His mother was a descendant of Thomas Benedict (see Vol. I. 202); his wife was a sister of Governor Boardman, and daughter of the first minister of New Milford. He was the grandfather of the learned theological professor, Rev. Dr. Nathaniel W. Taylor of Yale, who died in 1858, and of Dr. George Taylor of New Milford. Among his great-grandchildren is the wife of President Noah Porter, of Yale; also the wife of Hon. Thomas E. Stewart, of New York City.

Hosted by Google

plished Stephen Johnson of Lyme. Rev. Ezra Stiles, one of the purest and best gifted men of his age, who had been pastor of the church in Newport from 1756 until the invasion by the British, was their choice. He was informed of his election by Rev. Chauncey Whittlesey. Stiles said he thought "the diadem of a college president but a crown of thorns in such tumultuous times, especially when he must control from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and eighty young gentlemen students, who were a bundle of wildfire, some leaving for the army, and many coming in from other colleges." But he accepted the position, and the instruction of the rising men of the nation went forward among the leafy shades of New Haven, as if Revolution was not stalking abroad in the land.

The crash of arms came between Howe and Washington on the morning of September 11, at the same moment when Burgoyne, supposing that Howe was pushing up the Hudson, announced to his camp that he had sent the lake fleet to Canada, virtually abandoning his communications, and that his army must fight its way or perish. Upon the banks of a beautiful creek bearing the genial name of Brandywine, and flowing into the Delaware River, Washington, posted across the direct road of his adversary, awaited his approach; he had made the best possible arrangement of his forces for resistance or attack, and as he rode up and down his lines there was one prolonged shout of enthusiasm. Knyphausen soon appeared at Chad's Ford and feigned an attack, while Howe and Cornwallis were hastening to cross the river seven miles farther up and obtain the rear of the Americans. Receiving this information, Washington ordered Sullivan to check their course, while he would give Knyphausen a chance to fight in

Sept. 11.



Mrs. John Jay.
Sarah, daughter of Governor William Livingston.
[From a portrait in the possession of her grandson, Hon. John Jay.]

Hosted by Google

earnest. Just as Greene at the river's edge was about to begin the attack, a message from Sullivan came, saying that he had disobeyed orders because the "information upon which those orders were founded must be wrong." By two o'clock in the afternoon it was found, however, that the enemy's columns, having taken a wide circuit of seventeen miles, were in a position where they were likely to complete the overthrow of the Continental Army, and a sharp and complicated battle ensued. In the heat of the engagement on the right, Knyphausen crossed the Brandywine in one body and attacked the American left. It was near nightfall when Washington withdrew, and darkness ended the contest. His officers had displayed great personal courage. Lafayette was wounded, but kept the field till the close of the battle. Washington announced his defeat to Congress without casting blame upon any one; he stated his loss at about one thousand. The British lost nearly six hundred. Howe had made a vigorous attempt to crush the whole army between his two divisions, in which he signally failed.

Washington conducted his army to Germantown, then recrossed the Schuylkill and, watching the fords and roads, disputed the progress of the British at every step. Howe advanced compactly and with caution, never sending detached parties beyond supporting distance. There were severe skirmishes at various points. Congress took alarm and moved to Lancaster, thence after one day's session to Yorktown, in Pennsylvania. Washington was too weak to risk another battle. Howe managed to cross one of the lower fords and throw himself between Washington and Philadelphia. The rest was easy. On the morning of the 26th the British army marched into the city with music and banners and gay huzzas. Thus fell the capital, so long the seat of Congress. But the blow was light compared to what it would have been ten months before, when the British were at Trenton. "It will take so large a force to maintain it, that they will wish they had spared themselves the trouble," said Schuyler. When the news was announced to Franklin at Paris, he exclaimed, "No, no, it is not General Howe that has taken Philadelphia, it is Philadelphia that has taken General Howe!"

Sept. 26.

While yet the crack of the rifle was echoing along the banks of the Delaware, seven days before Howe's triumphal entry into the Quaker City, Burgoyne had begun his great contest with the American army at Saratoga.[1] He found himself, on crossing the Hudson upon a bridge of boats September 13th, in the presence of a foe hidden in the same dense forest

[1] This contest, or series of contests, is called variously the battle of Saratoga, Stillwater, and Bemus Heights. I have adopted the simple and better-known name of Saratoga, that the reader may have no confusion of ideas respecting the locality.

Hosted by Google

where he struck his own tents, whose drum-beat he could hear, but whose numbers and position he did not know. Gates had moved north on the 12th to a hill in Saratoga, where fortifications had been constructed under Kosciuzko, the famous Polish nobleman, then only twenty-one, and from a watch-tower in the top of a high tree was kept informed of every movement of the British. Burgoyne's had been a slow-toiling army through the wilderness, undoing the tangles day by day which Schuyler had prepared for them, and a cloud of red savages had preceded and hung on their trail, driving farmers and their families, faint and sick with terror, flying before their glistening tomahawks. The most shocking atrocities were of daily occurrence. Mrs. Schuyler (Catharine Van Rensselear) was returning from a visit in Albany to her summer home in Saratoga, and when within two miles of the mansion met a crowd of fugitives who told her that Burgoyne had crossed the Hudson, and also recounted the thrilling story of the murder of Jenny MacCrea, which had occurred near that very spot, and warned her of the danger of proceeding farther. She was alone in her carriage, and her only escort was a servant on horseback. "I must go for my daughters," she said; "besides, the general's wife ought never to know fear." And she drove on. She remained in her beautiful home only long enough to take a few valuables, as the servants informed her that Indians were already lurking in the shrubbery that adorned the grounds, and with her family escaped to Albany. Burgoyne's scarlet host boldly advanced two miles on the 19th, with all the glittering pomp and circumstance of war, accompanied by the wives and children of officers, as if the expedition were a vast pleasure-party — calashes for the ladies, horses, cannon, baggage, and stores in endless array; suddenly they were confronted by a bulwark of breastworks, artillery, and an eager foe. The Hudson was behind them, communication with Canada gone, and they had no alternative but to fight. At one o'clock the action commenced, Burgoyne leading the central division, General Riedesel the right, near the river, and General Frazer the left, making a circuit to assail the American right upon the heights; three hours later the combat was general and desperate; at five o'clock Burgoyne's army was in mortal peril; at sunset Riedesel with one regiment and two cannon struggled through a thicket and up a hill, and made a vigorous charge which stayed the fatal blow; with darkness the battle ended. The British bivouacked on the field, and huddled their dead into the ground promiscuously. They had lost five hundred. The Americans retired within their lines for the night. Their loss was less than four hundred. The glory of the day was due to the several regiments fighting with most obstinate courage in unison against regi-

Sept. 19.

Hosted by Google

ments. There was no manœuvring. Just praise was awarded to Morgan with his famous Virginia riflemen, and to Scammel of New England. But no men did more efficient service on this memorable occasion than the sons of New York, led by Colonel Philip Van Cortlandt and other gallant officers, who, in disputing the pathway to their own broad acres, were contending for a continent. They resented the removal of Schulyer from the chief command, and declared that an able general might have utterly routed Burgoyne. And Arnold came up afterwards and urged an attack upon the enemy while they were disconnected and without intrenchments. Gates refused, waiting for more troops, and a quarrel ensued.

The next day Burgoyne received a message from Sir Henry Clinton in cipher, informing him that he should commence attacking the strong places along the Hudson September 22, on his route to Albany; and Burgoyne, catching at the phantom of hope, replied that he could maintain his position until October 12. This communication was placed in a hollow silver bullet, which the bearer was ordered to deliver into Clinton's own hands; he crept along the wooded country by night, concealing himself by day, until he reached Fort Montgomery, where, in response to his inquiries for General Clinton, he was conducted into the presence of Governor George Clinton! Seeing his mistake, he swallowed the bullet. An emetic was promptly administered, the dispatch discovered, and its bearer hanged as a spy. But Burgoyne, knowing the extraordinary difficulties of communication, had taken the precaution to send several messengers by different routes, one of which reached his destination after a succession of perils and hardships.

Days passed away wearily to the inactive Britons, encamped so near the Americans that every joyful gun or shout was distinctly heard, but the tidings of Sir Henry Clinton's nearness for co-operation never came. Their camp was harassed on every side. The alarm was constant. Officers and men slept in their clothes. Horses grew thin and weak. The rations of the soldiers were clipped. Eight hundred sick and wounded were in the hospital. Finally Burgoyne saw that he had provisions for but a few days longer, and on the evening of October 5 summoned his generals to a final council relative to the policy of attacking the Americans.

Had they known what had occurred the day before at Germantown, they would have been less despondent. Washington, passing suddenly from the defensive and retreating to the audacious, had swooped down upon Howe's encampment in this pretty suburb of Philadelphia. It was then a small village of one street two miles long. Washington had planned a simultaneous attack upon the wings, front, and

Oct. 4.

Hosted by Google

rear, to be swiftly and vigorously made, from which the troops might expeditiously retreat if unsuccessful. He marched from his post on the Skippack road twenty miles from Philadelphia in the evening of the 3d, and the attack was made at dawn. It startled all the British legions in the vicinity; Howe sprang from his bed and rode to the scene just in time to see one of his battalions running away. Cornwallis, in Philadelphia, was wakened by the cannon, and his grenadiers ran the whole distance, although not reaching the ground until the action terminated. Washington dashed into the thickest of the fight. He thought for a time that victory was in his grasp. Greene was three quarters of an hour too late to perform his part of the programme, and then conducted his men carelessly, by which the divisions became mixed and caused serious confusion. Washington, at half past eight, gave the order to retreat, sending it to every division, and care was taken to remove every piece of artillery. He had lost in killed, wounded, and missing about one thousand. Among the officers killed was the accomplished General Nash. The enemy, according to Howe's report, lost five hundred in killed and wounded. General Agnew and Colonel Bird were both killed. This attack of Washington so soon after the defeat at Brandywine was a partial success, inasmuch as it convinced the world that defeat was not conquest. The British fleet soon attacked the Delaware forts, and several severe engagements occurred. At Redbank the Hessians were repulsed, and their commander, Count Donop, taken prisoner, mortally wounded, dying in the fort tenderly cared for by Duplessis de Maudit, a French officer of engineers who had joined the Americans.

While Burgoyne was making his preparations for the fatal battle of October 7, Sir Henry Clinton, four thousand strong, disembarked at Stony Point on the Hudson. He had first landed at Verplanck's Point to deceive Putnam at Peekskill, who quickly rallied a force to oppose his advance up the eastern bank of the river. Having thus diverted attention, Clinton crossed quietly in a fog, and from Stony Point, on the west bank, marched over Dunderberg Mountain, a distance of twelve miles, to attack forts Montgomery and Clinton, which were not defensible in the rear, they having been simply constructed to guard the river. Governor Clinton, with the first intimation that the British were on the move, had prorogued the new legislature, sitting at Kingston, and hurried to the points of danger, ordering militia to his aid, the regular troops having been drawn off to Saratoga and elsewhere in the great emergency, leaving the garrisons feeble. His brother, General James Clinton, commanded one of the fortresses and himself the other. They were surprised simultaneously by the descent of the British from the mountain in two

Oct. 6.

Hosted by Google

columns, and a desperate battle ensued. The New-Yorkers went out to meet the British and Tories in the open field, and after protracted resistance gave way only at the point of the bayonet, spiking their cannon before retiring. The British then vigorously attacked both forts on all sides, which were defended with spirit. At five o'clock in the afternoon a summons to surrender as prisoners-of-war was rejected by the Americans with scorn. The attack was renewed, and the works finally forced at nightfall by overpowering numbers. The Americans fought their way out, and many of them escaped. Governor Clinton leaped a precipice in the darkness and reached the water's edge, where he found his brother James about to enter a skiff, which would hold but one man with safety, and who insisted upon the governor's taking it instead of himself. The governor indignantly refused unless his brother could go also, which was impossible; and to end the dispute James fairly pushed the governor into the skiff and shoved it off, springing upon a loose horse near by and dashing through a squad of British troops, by whom he was wounded in the thigh with a bayonet, but reached next day his home in Orange County. The British loss was about one hundred and forty. Of the Americans, three hundred were killed and captured, nearly all of whom were New-Yorkers; and, as at Oriskany, their blood was not spilled for naught. Sir Henry Clinton received a check which delayed the execution of his plans, and thereby prevented his aiding the Northern British army, notwithstanding that, after clearing away the chain stretched across the Hudson at Anthony's Nose, he sailed into Newburgh Bay, sending a message gayly to Burgoyne, "Here we are! Nothing between us and Albany." The message, however, was intercepted.

Oct. 7. The next morning broke in mocking splendor. The woods about Saratoga were clad in their gayest foliage. The air was soft and balmy. Burgoyne had determined to hazard a battle, and was astir early. At ten o'clock his divisions were in readiness. Seconded by Riedesel, Philips, and Frazer, and with fifteen hundred picked troops, the best in his army, he advanced in three columns, sending skirmishers ahead, and, forming in line about three fourths of a mile from the American works, sat down in double ranks, courting battle. Ten guns were well posted. The grenadiers under Major Ackland were in the forest on the left; Frazer commanded the light infantry to the right, and sent foragers to cut wheat in a field with which to feed their starving horses, while some Canadians, loyalists, and Indians should attempt to get in the American rear, in order to discover the best place for forcing a way through towards Albany. The indications were quickly known in the American camp on Bemis Heights, which formed the segment of

Hosted by Google

a circle, the convex towards the enemy, and drums beat the alarm. Swiftly, as a rocket shoots into the sky and suddenly divides into manifold parts, a column bristling with fiery determination issued from the works into the open field, commanded by the invincible Morgan, and slightly curving in its swift approach opened to the right and the left in one fierce assault upon Frazer's forces, shouting and blazing with deadly aim; at the same instant General Enoch Poor, with his New Hampshire men, and General Abraham Ten Broeck,[1] with three thousand New-Yorkers, faced, unmoved, the cannon and grape-shot with which they were greeted, as, emerging from the woods, they fell furiously upon the British left. The dash and the courage of the Americans amazed and appalled the haughty Britons; they seemed to multiply into countless numbers, pouring a deadly fire upon each flank, then closed, and, grappling hand to hand, the mad mass swayed to and fro for half an hour, more than once, five times taking and retaking a single gun. The right wing of the British staggered and recoiled under the blow of Virginia, as Colonel Henry Dearborn, with a body of New-Englanders, descended impetuously from superior ground, and with flaming muskets broke the English line, which wildly fled; they rallied and reformed, when the whole American force dashed against their center held by the Germans; Frazer, the inspiring genius of the day, hurried to form a second line in the rear to cover a retreat, but received his death-wound. With his fall the British heart was stunned. The Americans saw their advantage, and pressed forward jubilant with certain victory. Burgoyne's first aid, Sir Francis Clarke, sent to the rescue of the artillery, was mortally wounded before he could deliver his message; thus eight British guns were captured. The grenadiers retreated, leaving Major Ackland bleeding upon the field.

It was but fifty minutes since the action began. The British, dismayed and bewildered, had scarcely regained their works, when Benedict Arnold, stinging under the smart of the refusal of Gates to give him a command, put spurs to his horse, outriding Major John Armstrong, who was sent to recall him, and without authority, save that of his own mad will, whirled from end to end of the American line, vociferating orders

[1] General Abraham Ten Broeck married Elizabeth, daughter of General Stephen Van Rensselaer, the fourth Patroon in the direct line from Kiliaen (see Vol. I. 61, 62), and his wife Catharine, the accomplished daughter of Philip Livingston, signer of the Declaration of Independence. General Ten Broeck was the son of Dirck Ten Broeck, many years recorder, and also mayor of Albany. He was born in 1734; he was a member of the New York Assembly from 1761 to 1775, also of the Revolutionary congress, and of the convention which organized the State government; he was afterwards state senator, mayor of Albany from 1779 to 1783, and filled other positions of trust.

Hosted by Google

which were obeyed as if by a charm, hurled the whole force against the strongest part of the British redoubt, continuing the assault for a full hour without success; then flinging himself to the extreme right, swept the Massachusetts brigade with him and streaming over the breastworks overpowered the Germans, killed Breymann, their colonel, and held the point which commanded the entire British position, the next instant falling badly wounded as his horse was killed beneath him. Ordering Matthew Clarkson at the most critical moment to bring up some regiments under Learned, the youthful aid had asked, "Where shall I find you, sir?" "Where you hear the hottest firing," was the quick response. Burgoyne exposed himself fearlessly; a musket-ball passed through his hat, and another tore his waistcoat. Night at last drew its curtain over the scene and the combatants rested.

In a little house on the river-bank the Baroness Riedesel and Lady Harriet Ackland spent the day in agonizing fear. A dinner awaited the four accomplished generals who went out in the morning expecting to return to the banquet at four. As the hour approached, the gallant and beloved Frazer was borne in dying instead. The table was removed and a bed improvised, in its place. The baroness put her three young children to bed that they might not disturb the sufferer; wounded men were constantly being brought in; they were laid in the entries and in all available parts of the house. Lady Ackland was in extreme distress concerning the fate of her husband, who was within the American lines. At ten o'clock in the evening Burgoyne ordered a retreat, but he had only transferred his camp to the heights above the hospital at daylight next morning. All day the two armies exchanged a sharp fire without any positive action. General Lincoln was severely wounded while riding by the side of Gates reconnoitering the British position. That evening, in a cold autumn rain, Frazer, who had been the life and soul of the invading army, was solemnly buried; immediately after which touching service Burgoyne stole away in the stormy darkness, leaving his sick and wounded to the mercy of the Americans. His few days' provisions were confided to boats on the Hudson, but the difficulty of guarding them was very great. His guns were dragged along the muddy roads. Towards daylight the no longer boastful Britons halted for rest. It rained all day on the 9th; in the evening the main portion of the drenched army forded Fish Creek, waist-deep, and bivouacked on the opposite bank in the open air. Burgoyne remained upon the south side with a strong guard, and passed the night in the mansion of General Schuyler. The next day he burned it, with all its valuable barns, mills and outbuildings — an elegant villa property. The ladies of the British officers suffered every

Hosted by Google

discomfort during this humiliating retreat. Lady Harriet Ackland, in the midst of the driving storm of the 9th, obtained permission to visit the American camp and ask to be allowed to share her husband's imprisonment and alleviate his sufferings. She set out at dusk in an open boat, accompanied by her waiting-maid, her husband's valet, and a chaplain, and was kindly received by Gates.

Burgoyne found himself unable to retreat to Lake George. The Americans had blocked the way. He encamped on an elevated plateau northeast of the village of Schuylerville; and the army of Gates was presently encamped all around him. He was subjected to a fire on flank and rear and front. His outposts were perpetually engaged. The soldiers dared not lay down their arms night or day. The whole camp became a scene of constant fighting. There was no safety for baggage, and no safe shelter for the wounded even while the surgeon was binding up their wounds. No water could be obtained, although close to Fish Creek and the Hudson River, for the trees were filled with Morgan's sharp-shooters. Provisions were nearly exhausted, wounded officers crawled into the cellars of houses; eleven cannon-balls crashed through one house where Baroness Riedesel was ministering to sufferers in the cellar. Rifle-balls were every moment perforating the tents, and on the 13th a cannon-ball swept across the table where Burgoyne and his generals were seated. On the 14th a cessation of hostilities until terms of capitulation could be arranged was proposed by Burgoyne. His aid, Colonel Kingston, was received at the crossing of the creek by James Wilkinson, the young adjutant-general of the American army, and conducted blindfolded into the presence of Gates. An unconditional surrender was at first demanded; but on the 16th Gates consented to more generous terms. In the night intelligence of the reduction of the Hudson River forts and Clinton's northerly advance reached Burgoyne, and he wavered for a moment, hoping to avoid surrender. But it was too late. He could not honorably recall his word. At nine o'clock on the morning of the 17th he attached his signature to the convention.[1] Two hours later his troops marched out of their lines and deposited their arms on the river-bank, the brave veterans so overcome with sorrow and shame that many sobbed like children as they grasped for the last time weapons they had borne with honor, some kissing their guns with the tenderness of lovers, others stamping upon them with oaths of rage. The scene was be-

Oct. 17.

[1] Burgoyne had earnestly desired that the treaty should be called a *convention*, and not a *capitulation*. This matter of taste was conceded, inasmuch as it did not alter the facts, or deprive the American arms of one leaf of the laurels they had won. For treaty in full, see Appendix A.

Hosted by Google

held by no American eyes except those of the two young aids of Gates, Morgan Lewis [1] and Wilkinson. The delicacy of the arrangement reflected the greatest credit upon the Americans. A few moments later, Burgoyne and his suite rode to the headquarters of Gates. The two commanders exchanged the compliments of soldiers. Burgoyne glittered in scarlet and gold a large, well-formed, handsome man with courtly manners; Gates, smaller of stature and without the airs of fine breeding or pretension, was clad in a plain blue overcoat — and Schuyler stood by him in citizen's dress. "The fortune of war has made me your prisoner," said Burgoyne, with hat in hand, as he took the extended hand of Gates. "I shall always be ready to testify that it has not been through any fault of your Excellency," was the graceful reply. The generals entered the tent of Gates and dined together on boards laid across barrels. During the same hour the Royal troops were served with bread by the Americans, as they were destitute, even without flour to make it; they had not more than one day's provision of any kind remaining. The generals courteously conversed; Burgoyne spoke very flatteringly of the Americans, praised their discipline and their dress, and particularly their numbers. "Your fund of men is inexhaustible; like the Hydra's head, when cut off seven more spring up in its stead," he remarked. At the close of the repast Burgoyne toasted Washington and Gates toasted the King of England. Then, as the captured army approached on their march to Boston. the two commanders stepped out in front of the tent, and standing together conspicuously in full view of both armies — the conquerors and the conquered — Burgoyne drew his sword, bowed, and presented it to Gates, Gates, bowing, received the sword, and returned it to Burgoyne.

No simple ceremony in the world's history was ever more significant. No martial event from the battle of Marathon to that of Waterloo — two thousand years — exerted a greater influence upon human affairs than the conquest of Burgoyne. Of the fifteen battles decisive of lasting results, during more than twenty centuries of human progress, the conflict of Saratoga is one. Up to that hour the Americans were esteemed "rebels" by the powers of the earth. Henceforward they were patriots attempting to rescue their country from wrong and outrage. The agents of Congress were no longer obliged to hold intercourse with the monarchs of Europe in stealthy ways. They met with open congratulations. A new power

[1] Morgan Lewis was born in 1754, hence was twenty-three years of age at this epoch; James Wilkinson was twenty. Morgan Lewis was the son of Francis Lewis, signer of the Declaration of Independence; he had been a student of law in the office of John Jay. In June, 1775, he joined the army in Cambridge, and was made captain of a rifle company. His subsequent career will be noted in future pages.

Hosted by Google

was recognized. A new element had entered into the diplomacy of nations. This victory determined the French alliance, and the French alliance was instrumental in securing the final triumph.

The figure of Philip Schuyler rises grandly above all others in this connection. To his judicious and distinguished efforts, his ingenious contrivances and unceasing vigilance, was due the glory. And yet he uttered no complaint at seeing his laurels worn by another; he even congratulated Gates (who had displayed no professional skill whatever,) in the true spirit of chivalrous courtesy and devotion to the common cause, and ministered to the personal comfort of the fallen foe. Riedesel sent for his wife and children as soon as the Royal army had passed by. They came in a calash, and a gentleman of dignified bearing, devoid of military insignia, lifted the children from it, kissing them and caressing them, and gallantly assisted the baroness to alight, offering her his arm and conducting her to the tent of Gates, where the generals were assembled; presently he suggested that his own tent was more quiet, and invited the lady to accept its hospitalities. "I then learned," writes the baroness, "that he was the American General Schuyler." Burgoyne spoke feelingly to Schuyler concerning the destruction of his Saratoga property. "Don't speak of it; it was the fate of war," was the magnanimous reply. And when Burgoyne moved on his journey to Boston, Schuyler sent an aide-de-camp to conduct him to his own home, — "an elegant house,"[1] said Burgoyne, "where, to my great surprise, I was presented to Mrs. Schuyler and her family; and where I remained during my whole stay at Albany, with a table of more than twenty courses for me and my friends, and every other possible demonstration of hospitality."

On the same day that Burgoyne at Saratoga assented to the terms of surrender, Sir Henry Clinton, having caused the destruction of every American vessel on the Hudson as far as the mouth of Esopus Creek, added to the general distress and terror by sending General Vaughan to strike a death-blow to Kingston, the temporary capital of New York. In size, wealth, and importance it was the third town in the State. Its population numbered between three and four thousand. Some forty-eight stone dwellings, of which several were large and elegant, with three or more hundred houses of wood, and two good-sized hotels, stood within an area of about twenty-five acres; together with a court-house built of blue limestone, and a Dutch Church with an extensive burial inclosure. It numbered among its inhabitants numerous families of distinction; as, for instance, the Van Gaasbecks, the Tappans, the Bruyns, the Elmendorfs,

[1] Sketch of Schuyler Mansion, page 146 (Vol. II.); *Speech of Burgoyne in the House of Commons*, on Mr. Vyner's motion, May 26, 1788.

Hosted by Google

the Bogarduses, the Hasbroucks, the Hardenburghs, the Van Burens, the Kierstedts, the Van Steenburghs, the Du Boises, the Van Deusens, the Banckers, and the Vanderlyns. John Vanderlyn, the painter, was then an infant. A boys' boarding-school flourished under Dominie Doll, in which the afterwards distinguished Edward Livingston (youngest brother of the Chancellor), then thirteen years of age, was a pupil. It was this institution to which he referred twenty years later, when he said, "I learned some lessons besides those found in the good teacher's *curriculum*. At my first dinner, potatoes and a piece of pork composed the whole bill of fare. The knife and fork were put in the solitary dish, and the schoolboy invited to partake. 'I don't like pork, we never eat it at home,' was my reply. 'Very well, my little man,' said my host, 'nobody obliges you to eat.' Consequently a potato was my repast. The second day brought no variety. On the third, fastidiousness succumbed to hunger, and I endured the pork and potato diet without variation through the term." Kingston was the refuge of numerous New York families of wealth and position, who with their liveried negro slaves and stylish equipages had retired from the city before the British entered and took possession of their costly homes. Philip Livingston, the signer of the Declaration of Independence, lived in a spacious house near the Hudson, which was also the present home of his daughter Sarah, and her husband, Rev. Dr. John Henry Livingston. The Rev. Dr. John Rodgers, of the Brick Church, New York City, residing near them, was aroused in the middle of the night of the 15th by an unlettered German whom he scarcely knew, and warned to immediately remove the household goods which he had stored in a small building on the river-bank; he did so, and with the Livingstons escaped to Sharon, Connecticut. James Beekman, whose fine mansion on the East River was proving so delightful to the British officers, had rented a farm near Kingston, and with his clever and accomplished wife (Jane Keteltas) was devoting himself to the education of his children. Some of the new state officials were attended by their families. Mrs. John Jay had recently joined her husband. The stately ceremonials, together with the showy costume of the period — wigs, ruffles, velvet coats, white silk stockings, and shoe-buckles of the gentlemen, and the court hoop, brocaded silks, and mountains of powdered hair, flowers, and feathers of the ladies — and the host of colored retainers, gave to the scene the effect of a little feudal court. The approach of the enemy was known in time for the flight of the people, some of whom were able to remove a portion of their personal property. Vaughan landed at Rondout, burning every habitation on the two-mile route to Kingston by two roads, where within the next three hours he accomplished the total destruction of the defense-

Hosted by Google

less town, burning every house and barn and building but one, including twelve thousand barrels of flour and a large quantity of other stores; then hastily retreated, fearing speedy vengeance. He presently crossed the Hudson, marched in various directions, burned the dwellings of all well-known Whigs, and committed wanton outrages which provoked universal condemnation, even among those who were attached to the king's cause. Two British officers, a wounded captain and his surgeon, were being hospitably entertained by Mrs. Judge Robert R. Livingston, the mother of the Chancellor and of Edward Livingston, at her beautiful home at Clermont, as the red smoking column, bearing the torch aloft, neared her dwelling, and they gratefully proposed to extend the protection of their presence and influence to save her property, which she politely declined; burying a part of her furniture, the remainder was packed upon wagons; and with her large family and retinue of servants she set forth on a weary journey to Salisbury, Connecticut; at the moment of starting, the figure of a favorite servant, a fat old negro woman, perched in solemn anxiety on the top of one of the loads, caused a burst of hearty merriment. Mrs. Livingston did not leave one moment too soon, as the smoke and flames rising from her mansion told her ere she was two miles away. The news from Saratoga suddenly checked these useless atrocities, and Sir Henry Clinton called in his troops and fell back to New York.

Gates sent Wilkinson to bear the victorious tidings of Burgoyne's surrender to Congress; while on the route he stopped at the quarters of Lord Stirling, in Reading, where in a free conversation he repeated part of a letter which Gates had received from Conway, a boastful, intriguing officer, who had joined the army at Morristown under an appointment from Congress. The letter contained strictures on the management of the army under Washington, with many disparaging comments. Stirling, prompted by friendship, communicated the matter to Washington, and a correspondence followed between Washington, Gates, and Conway, the incidents springing from which revealed an underhanded conspiracy that had been for some time in progress to secure the removal of the commander-in-chief. The success of the Northern army emboldened Gates, and Congress for a time was seriously influenced in favor of the aspirants. But public sentiment expressed itself in a manner so emphatic that the scheme was subsequently abandoned. As the winter approached Howe took observations of Washington's encampment at Whitemarsh, but after, as Jones quaintly remarks, "viewing the front of the American right, marching to the center and taking another view, from thence to the left and stealing a peep there," he decided that the works were invulnerable, and that he had better leave them in repose; and with some

Hosted by Google

skirmishing, in which a few were killed on both sides, marched back to the warm December fires and snug quarters of Philadelphia. Washington soon after this removed his weary and destitute army to Valley Forge; such was the want of shoes and stockings among his men, that it is said they might have been tracked over the hard frozen ground the whole distance from Whitemarsh by the blood of their feet. Governor Livingston appealed eloquently to the ladies of New Jersey to contribute from their superfluous woolen habits to the scanty clothing of the suffering soldiers; and every nerve was strained to prevent an absolute famine in camp. Within twenty miles of each other the two hostile armies thus lay quietly until spring.

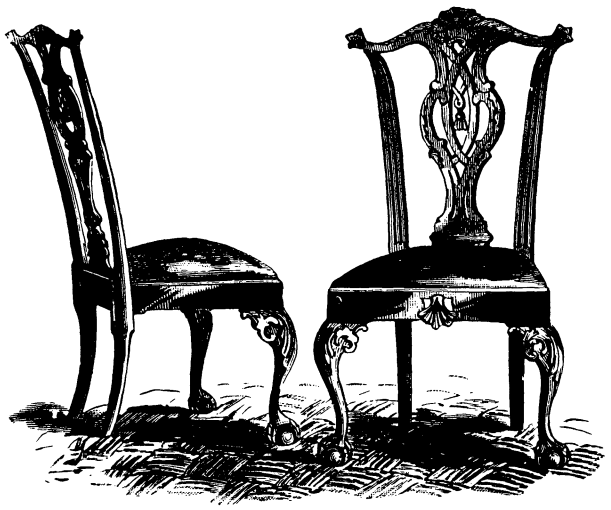
Putnam went into winter-quarters in the Highlands. While he was striving with his accustomed energy to provide needful shelter and food for his forces, Burgoyne's army was destroying every latent spark of sympathy with Great Britain, which had in Massachusetts survived the shock of horrors that distinguished this bloody year, through their conduct along the route to and in Boston, from whence they were to embark for England. The houseless inhabitants of Kingston were at the same time shivering in meagre hovels in country places; some few had found accommodations in Hurley, four miles from the ruins of the little capital, where the new state government lighted in its flight, and where the boarding-school of Dominie Doll continued to prosper. In all directions within the vicinity of New York the British forays had left ashes, desolation, and anguish along their track. It seemed as if everything useful to man was plundered or consumed. Meigs, with a detachment of Parsons's brigade, descended upon a band of freebooters in West Chester, capturing fifty, with the cattle and horses they had stolen. But it remained for Tryon to crown the cruelties of the year, by sending an expedition, under Emmerick, with blazing torches, through Tarrytown and neighborhood, which executed its mission with a degree of barbarity seldom equaled in civilized warfare. Among other outrages, Peter and Cornelius Van Tassel, noted Whigs, were dragged from their dwellings which were set on fire, and led to the British lines with halters about their necks, naked and barefoot, although the night was intensely cold; and women and children were mercilessly abused and exposed. Parsons wrote a letter of expostulation to Tryon, in which he said that if disposed to retaliate he could easily burn the Philipse or the De Lancey mansion, but had refrained from doing so because of the wanton and unjustifiable inhumanity of such acts. Tryon promptly replied that with more authority he "would burn every committee man's house within his reach." The result followed swiftly. A party of Americans landed from a whale-

Nov. 18.

Hosted by Google

boat at Bloomingdale within a week, surprised and captured a small guard at the landing, proceeded to the beautiful country-seat of Oliver De Lancey, and destroyed it, with everything it contained. The terrified ladies made their escape as best they could; Mrs. De Lancey concealed herself in a stone dog-kennel under the stoop until the party had re-crossed the Hudson; Miss Charlotte De Lancey (afterwards Lady Dundas), with her brother's child in her arms, Miss Floyd, a guest of the family (afterwards the wife of John Peter De Lancey and mother of Bishop De Lancey), and Mrs. John Harris Cruger, De Lancey's oldest daughter, fled into the woods and bushes in the darkness, remaining in the open air all night.

The last important event of 1777 was the selection of a new site for a fort to replace Forts Montgomery and Clinton; Governor George Clinton with Lieutenant-Governor Van Cortlandt, John Jay, and one or two members of the New York Legislature, made observations along the Hudson, and afterwards in council with Washington, determined upon West Point. Early in January, with the snow two feet deep, devoid of tents or suitable tools, Parsons's brigade, under Putnam's direction, threw up the first embankment. From that hour until to-day no foreign power has ever been able to pass up and down the Hudson River without doing homage to the American flag.



The Waddell Chairs.

(See page 157.)

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXXV.

1778, 1779.

VARIED EVENTS.

PARLIAMENT. — THE FRENCH ALLIANCE. — CAMP AT VALLEY FORGE. — BARON STEUBEN. — GARDINER'S ISLAND. — GENERAL HOWE SUPERSEDED BY SIR HENRY CLINTON. — THE BATTLE OF THE KEGS. — EVACUATION OF PHILADELPHIA BY THE BRITISH. — BATTLE OF MONMOUTH. — GENERAL LEE. — ARRIVAL OF THE FRENCH FLEET. — DESTRUCTION OF WYOMING. — NEW YORK CITY UNDER THE BRITISH. — THE PRISONS. — CITIZENS. — COLONEL LUDDINGTON. — FORAYS IN ALL DIRECTIONS FROM NEW YORK CITY. — DR. JOHN COCHRANE. — WINTER-QUARTERS. — WASHINGTON IN PHILADELPHIA. — THE VERPLANCK MANSION. — CONDITION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK. — NEW HAVEN ATTACKED. — BURNING OF FAIRFIELD. — BURNING OF NORWALK. — STORMING OF STONY POINT. — PAULUS HOOK. — SULLIVAN'S EXPEDITION AGAINST THE INDIANS. — THE SOUTHERN ARMY. — NEWPORT. — WASHINGTON AT MORRISTOWN.

THE news of the disaster to the British arms at Saratoga fell like a thunder-stroke upon the Court of England. Lord Petersham was the bearer of Burgoyne's dispatch, penned in the Schuyler Mansion at Albany. The public admired the grace and dignity with which he told his melancholy tale. "The style is charming," said a minister in the Royal presence. "He had better have beaten the rebels and misspelt every word in the recital," said the king.

The fourth session of Parliament, from November, 1777, to June, 1778, was a continued scene of controversy. The Opposition was growing every day more powerful. The employment of savages to fight the Americans was the well-spring of a blaze of eloquence seldom equaled in the history of the English language. Its condemnation brought Lord Chatham to his feet in one of the most brilliant speeches of his life. Lord North threw out hints in debate that he might make some proposition of accommodation, and the straw was seized by those who were eager to end the contest. Lord Chatham motioned that the door of reconciliation be opened by a treaty, before France, who was helping the Americans in an underhanded way, should take a bolder stand; but

Hosted by Google

the motion was lost. Franklin, from Paris, wrote to David Hartley (in October), that some act of generosity and kindness towards the American prisoners might soften resentment and facilitate negotiations. And the philanthropic Hartley, acting upon the hint, started a charitable subscription for that end to which large sums were added freely. In December, the situation being well known to Hartley, he addressed Parliament, urging the immediate opening of a treaty with the Americans while they were discontented with the cool and dilatory proceedings of the Court of France. "Do it before you sleep," he said. "But they slept and did it not," he wrote to the mayor and corporation of Kingston upon Hull, a few months afterward. No steps of importance were taken until the latter part of February.

By that time France had thrown off her veil, and all Europe was ringing with the news of England's disappointment. When Lord North rose in the House of Commons to introduce his Conciliation Bills, admitting that he and his party had been all in the wrong with regard to America, the astonishment of the crowd of members and peers present, says Walpole, was totally indescribable. A dull oppressive silence for some time succeeded his speech. "Not a single mark of approbation was heard from any man or description of men within the walls of Parliament." Charles Fox finally rose and ironically complimented Lord North on his happy conversion, and congratulated the Opposition on having obtained so powerful an ally, then with cutting emphasis inquired if a commercial treaty with France had not been signed by the American agents in Paris within ten days? Lord North was thunderstruck, and remained silent. When forced up by the clamor, he owned that he had heard such a rumor, but had received no official intelligence to that effect.

In Paris, during the greater part of January, Franklin, portly and seventy-two, had been weighing and chiseling the forty-four articles comprised within the two treaties — one of amity and commerce, the other offensive and defensive — which had been prepared for consideration. Arthur Lee was in a tumult of impatience, and wished Franklin "would make more haste." Temple Franklin said that his "grandfather's dining out every day prevented any business from being done." Whereupon Lee jotted in his journal that it "was an unpromising state of things when boys made such observations on the conduct of their grandfathers." As every phrase of the two treaties must be critically scanned and agreed upon by four men of differing opinions, then translated accurately into English, it was serious as well as protracted labor. In the midst of it letters from home told Franklin that his daughter, with an infant four months old, had retired from Philadelphia twenty miles into the country, carrying his library

Hosted by Google

and papers with her, and that André and other British officers were domiciled in his house, playing with his electrical apparatus, his musical glasses, his harps and harpsichords. Ralph Izard of South Carolina, who had been sent by Congress to the Court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, resided in Paris, and was every day in counsel with Franklin and his associates. The wife of Ralph Izard was Alice De Lancey, daughter of Peter De Lancey, and sister of Mrs. John Watts of New York, of the powerful family at that moment arrayed upon the side of Great Britain. On the evening of February 6 the treaties, having been perfected and approved, were duly signed and sealed by M. Gerard for France, and by Franklin, Arthur Lee, and Silas Deane for America.

On the 13th of March the French Minister in London, Marquis de Noailles, placed in the hands of the English Secretary of State a note announcing the significant event, couched in terms almost of derision. The very next day Lord North offered his resignation to George III., and advised that Lord Chatham be appointed Prime Minister in his stead. The king vehemently refused to consent; but when advised again and again that Chatham was the only minister who might reconcile all parties, and that if Lord North retired no other administration on the same basis could be formed, and, also, that in the estimation of Lord Barrington, Secretary of War, the nation had not one general equal to the emergency should Great Britain or Ireland be invaded by the armies of Europe, he found that his aversion must yield to the overwhelming tide of circumstances.

On the 20th the treaties were publicly acknowledged by France, and the American envoys presented to the king. Franklin was
March 20. dressed in a suit of black velvet, with snowy ruffles at wrist and bosom, white silk stockings, and silver buckles. Nothing more elegant was ever worn by a man of seventy-two in any age or country. Yet it was only the prevailing costume of an American gentleman of that date at dinners and fêtes at home. It is said that he had ordered a wig, but when the peruke-maker came with it and tried it upon the head it was destined to disfigure, it would not fit. The man manipulated until Franklin ventured to hint that perhaps the wig was too small. "O no, Monsieur, impossible," he replied. Then after a few more vain efforts he exclaimed, throwing it down angrily, "No, Monsieur; it is not the wig that is too small, it is your head that is too large." Franklin finally relinquished the idea of obeying arbitrary edicts of any character, and went to court without a court dress; and all Europe applauded. After the ceremony of presentation to the king, the envoys drove to the magnificent residence of Vergennes to partake of a dinner given in their

Hosted by Google

honor, the guests comprising some of the most distinguished of the French nobility. In the evening they were presented to Marie Antionette, who was charmingly enthusiastic over the new relationship.

The next day Lord Stormont left Paris for London. He found Lord North pressing his conciliatory measures in the hope of averting war with France, but determined to resign. The ministerial party were in bad humor, said they had been deceived and betrayed, and talked loudly about the disgraceful capitulation with the Americans. The Opposition doubted the acceptance of the proposals offered, and without opposing made their support as disagreeable as possible; they said that the Ministry, having failed in their secret designs, and being baffled and beaten, were trying to excuse their unexampled barbarity and devastation by pretences that were unreal. Both parties, however, in reality acquiesced.

Meanwhile Sir Guy Carleton had resented the course pursued when Burgoyne was given the command of the Northern Army, and had written to Lord Germain with so much asperity that his removal from the government of Canada followed. General Howe had been offended by the criticisms of his superiors and the lack of attention to his call for men and means, and requested permission to relinquish his command in America, which was promptly granted, Sir Henry Clinton being appointed in his stead. And Lord Howe had taken umbrage at what he esteemed a slight from his sovereign, and retired from the service. In choosing commissioners to the American Congress, innumerable objections to the gentlemen proposed were advanced. Lord Carlisle was then only known to the public as a man of fashion and pleasure. Against his appointment much was said both in and out of Parliament. The Duke of Richmond stated, in the course of an animated debate, that one of the governors in America made objection to the Congress because some of them sat in council with woolen caps on. "How inadequate must such an embassy be (referring to the fashionable lord) to men in woolen nightcaps!" he cried. Indeed, the Duke of Richmond was bent on making peace upon any terms which would secure the good-will of the Americans and retain them as allies. Lord Chatham entered the House of Lords April 7, walking with feeble steps, and leaning with one arm on his son William, with the other on Lord Mahon. With the sad scene of that day the world is familiar. The noble statesman yielded up his life while in the very act of performing a service for America. Had he survived even a few days longer he would probably have been called to the helm of public affairs and invited to solve the problem which he had himself propounded.

Hardly less doubtful and divided as to the proper course to be pursued

Hosted by Google

were another body of men, assembled in a little Pennsylvania town. The distressing condition of the army at Valley Forge, the growing depreciation of the paper-money, the ruinous loss of trade, and the augmented burdens of the war were variously discussed. A large party in Congress had become bitterly opposed to Washington through the industrious agencies at work to undermine his power. The dominant influence of Gates, and the feuds and factions and intrigues of jealous rivals, darkly clouded the whole winter sky of American interests. As Congress always sat with closed doors, the public knew no more of what passed than it was deemed expedient to disclose. But Washington was alive to the situation, and insisted upon the aid and counsel of a committee of five from Congress in forming a new system for the army Hence Reed, Folsom, Dana, Charles Carroll, and Gouverneur Morris were sent to Valley Forge in January, and remained nearly three months in camp. "The mighty Senate of America is not what you have known it; the State of Pennsylvania is sick even unto death," wrote Morris to Jay. In reply, Jay remarked: "Your enemies talk much of your Tory connections in Philadelphia. Take care. Do not expose yourself to calumny." As a portion of the family of Morris were loyalists, his mother's residence within the British lines during the whole war, and numerous relatives on intimate terms with the enemy, much anxiety was engendered on his account.

Mrs. Washington arrived at Valley Forge in February, and resided at headquarters until spring. A log-cabin was built for a dining-room, and numerous comforts were added to the rude establishment of her husband in consequence of her presence. Lady Stirling and her daughter Kitty, Mrs. Knox, and several other ladies also joined the little party, and two of the daughters of Governor William Livingston spent a few weeks in camp by invitation of their aunt, Lady Stirling.

Baron Steuben, the great Prussian disciplinarian, arrived at headquarters on one of the last days of February. He was forty-eight years of age, of exceptional dignity and princely bearing, was richly dressed on all occasions, wearing a medal of gold and diamonds designating the order of "Fidelity" suspended at his breast, and from having been an officer of Frederick the Great, Grand Marshal of the Court of the Prince Hohenzollern-Hechingen, and the intimate associate of potentates and noblemen, he possessed a fascination for the half-frozen, discontented, and almost revolting army, that turned for a time the whole current of thought. Washington, advised of his approach from the seat of Congress at York, rode out with his staff to meet him on the road. Steuben was accompanied by an imposing suite of aids, one of whom was Major L'Enfant,

Hosted by Google

afterwards famous for planning the city of Washington. Every eye was fixed with curious interest upon the brilliant cavalcade that swept through the miserable village of huts where the half-clad soldiers were congregated. And a stately dinner-party assembled that evening, which, with the presence of the ladies, and the sparkle of the jewels of the new-comers, was in strange contrast with the roughness of the log-cabin where the table was spread. Steuben had left Europe in the autumn, at the suggestion of Count St. Germain, who desired for America the services of a thoroughly experienced military scholar. Washington asked the baron to organize an inspectorship, and erelong the whole army was under drill, and a select military school in practical operation. Officers were trained as well as the men. The baron took upon himself the humblest duty of a drill-sergeant. He marched with the men, musket in hand, to show the manual exercise he desired to introduce. He rose at daybreak, sipped his coffee and smoked his pipe while a servant dressed his hair, and by sunrise was in the saddle, equipped at all points, and rode to the parade alone if his suite were not ready to attend him. He adapted his tactics to the nature of the army and country, and Washington found him a most intelligent and consummate officer. His greatest difficulty was his ignorance of the English language. When the men blundered in their exercises, he blundered in his explanations; his French and German were of no avail; then he usually lost his temper and swore in all three languages at once. But his generous impulses and his personal magnetism soon made him a favorite with the men. His discipline extended to their comforts; he examined the doctor's reports, visited the sick, saw that they were well lodged and attended, and inquired into their treatment by the officers, not infrequently sharing his last dollar with those who were in want and suffering.

During the spring months Long Island was in great tribulation. That portion of the inhabitants who consigned themselves to British protection in 1776, were under a delusion that the troops raised among themselves, commanded by Oliver De Lancey, John Harris Cruger, Gabriel Ludlow, and other loyalists, were for their own specific defense. They learned to their sorrow the value of foreign guardians, who were constantly committing depredations; an instance where Dr. Tredwell, a Long Island gentleman of fortune and position, and a well-known loyalist, riding one of his own valuable horses through a wood, was stopped by a party of British dragoons, and ordered to dismount and carry his saddle home on his back while they took his horse, was but one of the multitude of similar outrages. But the loyalists' battalions were now ordered elsewhere, the forts where they had been stationed were demolished, and to all com-

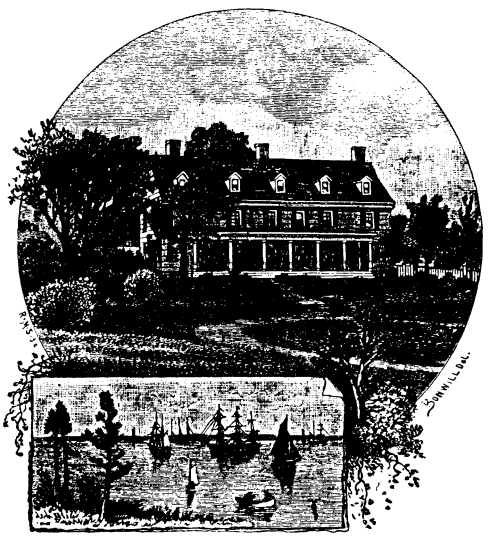
Hosted by Google

plaints the answer came from British headquarters, "Raise militia and defend yourselves." The energetic patriots speedily communicated this condition of affairs to the forces in Connecticut, and whale-boats were at once fitted out, manned by from twenty to twenty-four men each, for purposes of retaliation, capturing Tories, and destroying the resources of the British in New York, keeping Long Island in perpetual alarm and commotion from one end to the other. These whale-boats, after crossing the Sound, were frequently dragged across the narrow point of the island, known as "the canoe place," and launched into the South Bay, where they effectually broke up a lucrative trade in which at least one hundred and fifty small vessels were engaged in supplying the New York markets, through bartering merchandise with the country people for hogs, lambs, calves, poultry, butter, cheese, shell-fish, and other produce; the patriots ventured even to Rockaway (within fifteen miles of New York City), and captured or destroyed every boat in their way, sending those of value round Montauk Point to New London. The coasters on all sides of the island shared the same fate. In vain the loyalists begged for cutters to stop the mischief; General Howe had nothing to do with it, and Lord Howe chose to keep his cutters taking prizes at sea, along the coasts of the Delaware and Chesapeake, to one eighth of the proceeds of which he was personally entitled; therefore the reply came again and again, "You have a militia, defend your own trade." The eastern extremity of Long Island was as a rule devoted to the American cause. Neither threats nor bribes had induced its inhabitants to resign the principles to which they had plighted their faith. Abandoned to the mercy of the foe, they had borne insults and robberies with patience. The British posts at Sagg Harbor and Southampton overawed them, but in no wise weakened their patriotism or integrity. Their carts and teams were impressed, oxen killed, and hay and grain seized, whenever the wants of the enemy demanded. Payment was sometimes made, but never in full, nor was any consideration shown by the inferior officers when the farmers protested against parting with the necessaries wanted for their own families. The beautiful manor of Gardiner's Island, the first founded of all the manors of New York, was stripped every year of its produce, and some of its finest timber cut and carried away by the British. One of its trustees, Colonel Abraham Gardiner, was arrested at his home in Easthampton and threatened with all the penalties of martial law for refusing, when ordered by Tryon, to call out the militia to defend the coasts from the whale-boats of Connecticut. His unflinching decision in the matter finally convinced the British officers of the folly of forcible measures, and they liberated him; nor did they make much effort after-

Hosted by Google

wards to subdue the spirit of the people of that region, whose bitter hatred they had so thoroughly invoked. The son of Gardiner was even then an officer in Washington's army, although the fact was not known to the invaders. The manor-house upon Gardiner's Island, built in 1774, was a favorite resort for the British officers when on hunting or holiday expeditions, the marks left where they pitched quoits in the dining-room on rainy days being still in existence.

In the mean time Sir Henry Clinton proceeded to Philadelphia, and assumed the chief command of the British army. General Howe prepared to sail for England. The winter had been without incident of a military character, save the skirmishes which attended every foraging party who ventured a half-dozen miles from the Quaker City. The inventor, David Bush-nell, contrived a large number of machines in kegs, which were set adrift on the Dela-wareRiver, the design being to work mis-chief upon the vessels anchor-ing at Phila-delphia; and they created no little conster-nation. Two boys went out in a small boat to pick up the first keg that was seen, and while rolling it into their craft it burst with a great explosion, kill-ing the unfor-tunate boys. An alarm was consequently spread through the city. Other kegs came in sight, and the wharves and shipping were manned; some of the ships of war poured whole broadsides into the Delaware, "as if," says a humorous writer of the day, "the kegs were filled with armed rebels, who were to issue forth in the dead of night as the Grecians did of old from their wooden horse at the siege of Troy, and take the city by surprise." The affair furnished food for an endless amount of clever sarcasm and healthful laughter, and became the subject of Francis Hopkinson's famous satirical ballad, "The Battle of the Kegs."



Gardiner's Island Manor-House, and View of Gardiner's Bay.

[Built in 1774 by David Gardiner, Sixth Lord of the Manor of Gardiner's Island. See Vol. I. 696.]

Copies of Lord North's plans for conciliation were sent on a swift sailing vessel to America, immediately upon the news reaching England that the treaty had actually been concluded at Paris. The Ministry thought thus

Hosted by Google

to forestall effects. Congress unanimously resolved, upon receiving these drafts about the middle of April, that no conference could be held with any commissioners from Great Britain, or treaties considered, until that power had withdrawn its armies and fleets, and acknowledged the independence of the United States. On the 2d of May a messenger arrived from France with the two treaties, which on the 4th were ratified by Congress, and at once published throughout the country. The 6th was observed as a day of public rejoicing at Valley Forge. The terms of the treaties were read by the chaplains to the several brigades, solemn prayers were offered, and eloquent discourses delivered. Then followed a grand review, a national discharge of thirteen guns, and a banquet; the tables were arranged in a sort of amphitheater where all the officers of the army could be seated. Mrs. Washington graced the occasion with her presence, also Lady Stirling and her daughter, Mrs. Knox, Mrs. Greene, and several other ladies. The French gentlemen of rank who had joined the army were especially gratified with the demonstrations of delight with which the tidings were welcomed that henceforward the flags of the two countries would go together into the battle-fields of America.

May 2

May 6.

The noise of jubilant cannon had scarcely died away at Valley Forge, when Philadelphia was astir with revelry. Howe had been absorbed with amusements and dissipation while discreditably besieged all winter by the army he affected to despise — less than half as large as his own. His gay young officers had also been killing time with private theatricals and all manner of loose diversions. Now they thought to compliment their indulgent commander by giving a magnificent entertainment prior to his departure for England, which should also be a graceful return to the ladies of Philadelphia for their civilities and courtesies during the season. Major André was one of the most efficient of the twenty-two chivalrous young Britons who projected the fête, to which was given the Italian name *Mischianza* — medley — and with Oliver De Lancey, Jr., of New York, painted the chief of the decorations. It was a tournament on a grand scale, a brilliant mingling of regatta, naval, and military procession, knightly evolutions and feats of arms, fireworks, and a ball. This brilliant farewell was doubly dear to General Howe, from the fact that he felt wronged by the Ministry. But it called more attention to his inefficiency than any other event of the war. Why had he given his officers leisure for such performances! With twenty-four thousand of the best troops in the world, why had he not attacked the little shivering, half-fed army by whom he was imprisoned! And what sort of a general must he be to peaceably allow the saucy New Jersey Legis-

May 18.

Hosted by Google

lature, with Governor Livingston at its head, to hold its sessions in Trenton, only thirty miles away! The festival was universally pronounced a ridiculous and untimely farce. The next afternoon it was discovered that Lafayette, with twenty-five hundred men, had taken post on Barren Hill — about half-way from Valley Forge — as if to watch the movements in and about Philadelphia. At ten in the evening Howe sent Grant with above five thousand troops by a circuitous route, to gain the rear of Lafayette; going out early the following morning himself, attended by Clinton and Knyphausen, with nearly six thou- May 20. sand men, to meet the Americans after their expected rout. But there were no routed Americans to meet. Lafayette, discovering the danger, threw out small parties into the woods to show themselves as the heads of attacking columns, thus bringing Grant to a halt to prepare for action, while he crossed with his main force the ford of the Schuylkill. Wayworn and crestfallen, Howe returned to Philadelphia. On the May 24. 24th he resigned the command to Clinton, and embarked for home.

A few days later, orders from the Ministry, prepared in consequence of the impending war with France, reached Clinton to evacuate the hard-won city of Philadelphia, and concentrate his forces at New York. While military quarters were in the stir and bustle of preparation, and heavy cannon and hay and horses were being shipped, the commissioners under the Conciliatory Bills, empowered to negotiate for the restoration of peace, landed, after a voyage of six weeks. Their secretary was Adam Ferguson, the celebrated Scotch philosopher and historian. They were surprised and indignant to find their plan of operations so completely disconcerted by the lords of England. They said they should never have undertaken the mission had they known of the orders for evacuation. Lord Carlisle wrote, "Three thousand of the miserable inhabitants have embarked on board our ships, not daring to remain in the city, as they can expect no mercy from those who come after us."

There was not the shadow of an opening for the messengers of peace. Even their private letters were angrily resented. Lafayette, because of some reflections on the conduct of France in the public letter of the commissioners to the President of Congress, challenged Lord Carlisle to meet him in single combat. The streets of Philadelphia were cumbered with heaps of furniture, and auctions were taking place daily on the sidewalks. The people were in the utmost consternation. "A more affecting spectacle of woe I never beheld," said Governor Johnstone. Becoming convinced that the commission could do no good as long as independence was tacitly acknowledged by the retreat from Philadelphia, the commissioners re-embarked, and with the retiring fleet sailed down the Delaware.

Hosted by Google

Meanwhile Clinton and his army crossed the river and commenced a slow, tiresome journey through New Jersey by land. The wagons laden with stores and provisions were so numerous that they alone formed a line twelve miles long. The bridges were all gone, wells filled up, and every conceivable obstruction thrown in the way of their progress. The weather was excessively hot for June. Small bodies of Americans harassed the column perpetually in the rear. Washington placed Arnold in command of Philadelphia, and followed the British. The traitorous Lee had been exchanged, and reinstated in the army, and when Washington summoned a council of war to discuss the policy of an attack upon Clinton, he not only opposed the measure with spirit, but influenced the majority of the officers to do the same. Washington, however, was determined to execute his purpose, and intrusted a fit command for the oldest major-general to Lafayette, who marched towards the enemy with the utmost alacrity. The following day Lee was ordered forward with two brigades, to command the whole advance party. Just after midday on the 27th, Washington summoned his officers to headquarters and directed them to engage the enemy on the next morning, and ordered Lee to concert with his officers the mode of attack. But when Lafayette, Wayne, and Maxwell came to Lee at the hour named, he refused to form any plan. The next morning he moved languidly, and his conduct was such that the suspicions of Lafayette were aroused, who sent a message to Washington that his presence was needed on the field. Twice were similar messages sent by John Laurens, son of the statesman. The officers were constantly receiving orders and counter-orders from Lee; Wayne was on the point of engaging the enemy in earnest, when Lee enjoined him only to make a feint. There was marching and counter-marching, crossing and recrossing a bridge, and a halt for an hour. Thus Clinton was given ample time for preparation; finally he sent out a division to attack the Americans, who retreated. Washington was coming up with the main body to support the advance as he had promised, when he encountered the fugitives. He asked an officer the meaning of it all, who smiled significantly, saying he had retreated by order; another officer exclaimed with an oath that they were flying from a shadow. A suspicion flashed across Washington's mind of the treachery of Lee, and he galloped furiously forward, exclaiming in a voice of anger as he met the latter, "What is the meaning of all this, sir?" Lee stammered, at first confused, and then in an insolent tone said, "You know the attack was contrary to my advice and opinion." Washington sharply replied, "You should not have undertaken the command unless you intended to carry it through." But there was no time for words. The British were

June 28.

Hosted by Google

coming down the narrow road, and would be upon them in fifteen minutes. Washington swiftly formed his retreating regiments into a barricade, and planted other troops upon higher ground. Lee was ordered to the rear, and while sitting idly upon his horse, explaining to by-standers that the attack was madness and could not possibly be successful, Washington effectually checked the advance of the enemy, and after a pitched battle drove them back to the ground which Lee had occupied at first. At night two brigades hung on the British right, a third on their left; while the rest of Washington's forces planted their standards on the field of battle, and lay on their arms to renew the contest at daybreak. Washington himself, wrapped in his cloak, reclined at the foot of a tree. When the morning dawned the British had departed. Clinton had not even given his weary troops opportunity for a nap, but at ten o'clock in the evening had marched after the division with the baggage-train, abandoning the severely wounded and leaving his dead unburied. The loss of the British was more than four hundred; and during their march through New Jersey above eight hundred deserted their standard. The American loss in the battle, which took its name from the adjacent village of Monmouth, was in killed and wounded two hundred and twenty-nine.

A court-martial found Lee guilty of disobedience, misbehavior before the enemy, and disrespect to the commander-in-chief, and suspended him from command for twelve months. Congress confirmed the sentence, and in 1780, provoked by an impertinent letter, dismissed him from the service. His chief consolation in his disgrace was the most virulent railing against Washington.

When Clinton reached New York, his army went into quarters upon Manhattan, Staten, and Long Islands. Washington encamped his forces at New Brunswick, Elizabeth, Newark, Hackensack, and White Plains. Aaron Burr and other energetic young officers were sent on reconnoitering expeditions to Bergen, Hoboken, and various points of observation, to obtain information concerning the intentions of the enemy. The French fleet commanded by Count D'Estaing anchored at the mouth of the Delaware on the 8th of July. A less rough voyage, and it might have intercepted Lord Howe's squadron. Having dispatched a frigate with the illustrious M. Gerard, the first French Minister, and Silas Deane, to Philadelphia (Congress having returned to that city on the 2d of July) the fleet followed Lord Howe to Sandy Hook, and would have entered and offered battle in New York Bay could pilots have been found to take its largest ships through the channel. New York City was thrown into the most violent commotion. The loyalists had the mortification of seeing the British fleet blockaded and insulted in their own harbor. The

Hosted by Google

metropolis was indeed surrounded by an enemy. Clinton wrote to Germain that he should probably be compelled to retire to Halifax. Young Laurens was sent to Count D'Estaing as aid and interpreter. A frank and cordial correspondence with Washington finally induced the Count to trim his sails for Newport; and Greene and Lafayette were sent to join Sullivan in command of Rhode Island, who was to co-operate in an attempt to recapture that stronghold from the British. Lord Howe, whose intended successor, Admiral Byron, had not yet arrived, sailed in pursuit of the French. The two fleets were on the point of engaging when separated, wrecked, and scattered by a violent storm. The enterprise against Rhode Island proved a failure in all respects, and the disappointment led to bitter jealousies between the Americans and their allies.

The ceremonials to be observed at the reception of the first minister plenipotentiary to the United States, were a matter of no little study. Richard Henry Lee, Samuel Adams, and Gouverneur Morris comprised the committee who drafted the form of presentation; this was discussed five days by Congress. It was necessary that the details should be in harmony with the peculiar condition of the government, therefore no absolute precedent could be followed.

On the memorable occasion Richard Henry Lee and Samuel Adams, in a "coach-and-six," waited upon the Minister at his house. Presently the Minister and the congressional delegates entered the coach together, the Minister's chariot following, with his secretary. The carriages having arrived at the State House, the Minister was conducted to his chair in the congress chamber, the President and Congress sitting. The Minister being seated, he gave his credentials into the hands of his secretary, who advanced and delivered them to the President. The secretary of Congress read and translated them, after which Mr. Lee announced the Minister to the President and Congress who all rose together; the Minister bowed to the President and to the Congress, they each bowed, and all seated themselves again. In a moment the Minister rose and made a speech to Congress, the members sitting; after which the President and the Congress rose, and the President pronounced an answer to the speech, the Minister standing; this being ended, all were once more seated. The President, Congress, and the Minister then again rose together, the Minister bowed to the President, who returned the salute, then to the Congress, who also bowed in return, and withdrew, attended home in the same manner in which he had been brought to the house. During this august scene the door of the congress chamber was thrown open, and about two hundred gentlemen of distinction were permitted to witness

Hosted by Google

the ceremony, among whom were several foreign noblemen. An elegant dinner given to the Minister by Congress was the final event of the day.

Ere these auspicious occurrences had warmed the heart and quickened the pulse of America, Western New York was crimsoned with blood. Niagara was a British post, the common rallying-place of Tories and savages, of refugees and vagabonds. Brandt had retired hither after St. Leger's repulse at Fort Stanwix. And here many a dark deed of vengeance was planned. In June a party sallied forth, eleven hundred strong, composed of desperadoes and Indians, led by John Butler, formerly in some official connection with Sir John Johnson, and one of the valiant in the battle of Oriskany, who, after laying waste the country on the route, descended upon the fair settlement of Wyoming in the Susquehanna Valley, which consisted of eight townships each five miles square, massacring its inhabitants in the most brutal and fiendish manner. The able-bodied male population — one thousand or more — were chiefly away in the army; Colonel Zebulon Butler, an officer in the Continental army stationed at West Point, was home on a furlough, and gathering the old men and boys, and such of the farmers as he could hastily collect in the emergency, commanded the defense. But his force, all told, numbered less than four hundred, and the horde of invaders, more than twice as numerous, knew the woods well, and had come to destroy and deal death, not to recover and hold. In the engagement nine tenths of the heroic defenders were killed and scalped. The British leader boastfully reported having burned a thousand houses and every mill in the valley. He omitted to state that in several instances men, women, and children were shut into buildings and all consumed together; or that monsters in human shape, painted like Indians, took the lives of their nearest of kin with diabolical fury. A horrified group of survivors fled through a pass in the hills to the eastern settlements. Then the bloodthirsty marauders left the smoking scene of solitary desolation, and turned towards the region of Rochester to continue their terrible work. Early in November Walter, the son of John Butler, commanded the war-party that repeated the terrible drama of Wyoming at Cherry Valley. Humanity itself was disgraced by the wholesale slaughter, and a thrill of horror vibrated from one end of the country to the other.

Washington passed much of the summer at White Plains, although he visited West Point frequently, and was at the various posts in New Jersey from time to time. On the 7th of August another disastrous fire raged violently for several hours in New York City, commencing in Pearl Street, near Broad; sixty-three houses and a number of stores

Aug. 7.

Hosted by Google

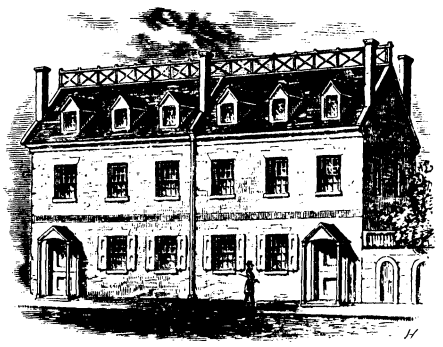
were consumed. The following day, in the midst of a heavy thunder-storm, a sloop at anchor in the East River, with two hundred and forty-eight barrels of gunpowder on board, was struck by lightning, and the explosion unroofed a number of houses, and demolished windows and furniture in every direction. Lord Stirling while in camp at White Plains obtained permission for his wife and daughter Kitty to visit his eldest daughter, Mrs. Robert Watts, in New York City, where they spent the month of August, and were treated with the utmost civility by the British officers. They found Mrs. Watts prostrated from the effects of the alarm of the fire and the explosion, and her husband "heartily sick of British tyranny." They spoke in their letters of courtesies received from Walter Rutherford, whose wife was Lord Stirling's sister; from Andrew Elliot, collector of the port under the Crown; from Lord Drummond, son of the Earl of Perth, who was in America to look after his father's interests as proprietor of East New Jersey; from Nicholas Bayard, whose country-seat was on the eminence above Canal Street; and from William Smith, the historian, afterwards chief justice of Canada. "They were our constant visitors, and desired to be remembered to you," wrote Lady Stirling to her husband. Smith had been an influential opponent of the British measures until a recent date, an intimate friend of Stirling, Governor Livingston, John Morin Scott, John Jay, and Gouverneur Morris. The latter had been a student of law in his office. Suddenly he was apprehended, examined, and confined a state prisoner in Livingston Manor, for having sent intelligence to the enemy (it was said); and finally, with his wife and family, library, household effects, servants, chariot, and horses, was banished to New York City. On the same sloop with Smith were Major Colden, eldest son of the late Governor Colden, and Samuel Bayard, former secretary of the province, who for refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the new State were ordered beyond the British lines.

Walter Rutherford lived in the fine substantial house of the sketch, which stood on the present site of the Astor House. The adjoining dwelling was the home of William Axtell, who prior to the war was one of the governor's council, and whose wife was the daughter of Abraham De Peyster, the treasurer. He had favored the American cause at the start, but when his estate came into the power of the conquerors his sentiments changed, and he became a loyalist of the first magnitude. He had an elegant mansion in Flatbush, Long Island, and when commissioned as colonel of a regiment of loyalists the men raised, numbering about thirty, were encamped in his courtyard, apparently to guard his premises. Jones says he had a secretary, an aide-de-camp, a chaplain, a physician, and a surgeon in full pay. And to him was confided the power of grant-

Hosted by Google

ing licenses to all the public-houses in the county, and passes over the Brooklyn Ferry, which were the sources of a large revenue.

New York City, with its piles of ruins and its poisonous prisons, was no longer the gay progressive metropolis of former years. The late fire had been less extensive that that of 1776, but the wealthy loyalists were great sufferers. The Cruger family lost six houses, Gerardus Duyckink seven, William Bayard six houses and stores, and Peter Mesier and his family not less than fifteen buildings. A strange village of huts had sprung up on the site of the fire of 1776, called "Canvas Town," which was tenanted by banditti, and soldiers who obtained the means of dissipation by plunder, or starving wretches who turned highwaymen in despair; it was, in short, a hideous plague-spot. A sense of insecurity destroyed all comfort. No citizen dared walk out after sunset without a guard. Robberies were of nightly occurrence. The faith pinned to the arms of Great Britain was becoming sadly weakened. The flight of Clinton from Philadelphia, chased across the Jerseys by Washington, the presence of a French fleet cruising off Sandy Hook, and the knowledge that the city was beleaguered on every side by the American army, were not conducive to happiness. The editors of the Tory newspapers exerted themselves to keep up the spirits of the anxious by furnishing exaggerated accounts of "rebel misfortune" and misery. They said Connecticut was in chaotic confusion all through her borders; that in Maryland only forty recruits responded to the call of Congress; that fevers were raging in Philadelphia and the people were longing for King George; that the whole South was weary of the war, and would rise at the first landing of a British army and shake off the usurping tyranny of Congress; that the inhabitants were starving and rebellious in Boston, and that all their food was transported from the South by a land-carriage of seventeen hundred miles; in short, that the chief supplies of the Eastern States were wholly cut off, trade sunk, gold and silver gone, not a piece of coin to be seen anywhere, a cartload of the Continental currency not worth a dollar, and the "rebel army such a miserable set of ragged creatures as was never scraped together before." There were some who believed these statements, but the majority grimly trembled. The loyalists and refugees formed themselves into companies to aid in



Home of Walter Rutherford. Home of William Axtell.

Hosted by Google

the defense of the city should it be besieged as expected, and commanded by Major David Matthews, paraded in the fields, making a fine appearance.

The poverty-stricken were in a perishing condition, and the rich loyalists and many of the British officers contributed liberally to their needs. Trade had ceased, there was no employment for laborers, and provisions and fuel were scarce and extravagantly high. And if such was the condition of the inhabitants at large, what must the prisoners of war have suffered! They were confined by thousands. In the Middle Dutch and other churches wounded men would crawl to the windows begging aid, and a sentinel, pistol in hand, would turn back the gifts of the charitable. In the gloomy old sugar-houses hundreds were chained, and those might almost as well have been who were allowed to walk about within their narrow confines. The coarsest food was doled out in scanty measure, and the men devoured it like hungry wolves, or ceased to eat at all. From ten to twenty died daily, and their remains were thrown into pits without a single rite of burial. In the old Provost, where officers chiefly were incarcerated, so closely were they packed that when their bones ached at night from lying on the hard planks, and they wished to turn, it was done by the word of command, and the whole human mass turned at once. In Wallabout Bay, across the river, the hulk of the *Jersey*, an old sixty-four gun-ship, unseaworthy, with masts and rigging gone, was a scene of human suffering, which even now at the end of a century chills the hand that would draw a pen picture however inadequate. No warmth in winter, no screen from the scorching summer sun, no physician, no clergyman, soothed or consoled the dying in that center of contagious disease, which was never cleansed, and constantly replenished with new victims. It is estimated that eleven thousand of its dead were buried on the Brooklyn shore. Many a New York citizen tried to alleviate the horrors of the prisons and prison-ships, for there were several of the latter, but military law prevailed; no communication with prisoners was allowed, and aid conveyed to them by stealth only doomed the benefactor to a similar fate. Washington was constantly doing all in his power to exchange prisoners; and when he remonstrated with the British officers as to the emaciated and dying condition in which his brave men were returned to him, the reply came that they were lodged in roomy buildings and fed the same as the British soldiers.

Many of the citizens who remained in New York during the war, taking no active part in the unhappy disputes, had hoped to pursue their avocations undisturbed, or to protect their property interests by their presence. The Stuyvesants were of the latter class. Gerardus Stuyvesant

Hosted by Google

resided in the old gubernatorial homestead; his two sons occupied with their families the comparatively new mansions, known respectively as "Petersfield" and "The Bowery House."[1] Frederick Philipse, third lord of Philipse Manor, was living in the city. He had intended in the beginning to maintain a strict neutrality; but having no faith in the success of the American arms, and in constant intercourse with the husbands of his two sisters, Colonel Beverly Robinson and Colonel Roger Morris, who had joined the king's forces, he was soon suspected of favoring the enemy, and compelled to take the oath of allegiance to Congress or a final farewell of his ancestral home; thus he removed to New York. He was an ardent Churchman, and a courtly gentleman of scholarly tastes. He lived in a style of great magnificence. His wife, an imperious woman of fashion, was in the habit of appearing upon the roads of Westchester, skillfully reining four splendid jet black horses; she was killed by a fall from her carriage just before the Revolution. Philipse mixed very little in public affairs, disliked politics, and opened his purse generously for all charitable purposes.

Andrew Hamersley, for whom Hamersley Street was named, an alderman of the Dock Ward, and a vestryman of Trinity Church, was a rich importing merchant who unostentatiously went about doing good while the city was in gloom and despondency.[2] The Revolution seriously im-

[1] See sketches, Vol. I. 217; Map of Stuyvesant Bowery, Vol. I. 188.

[2] Andrew Hamersley was born in 1725. His father was William Hamersley, of the same baronial family as Sir Hugh Hamersley, born in England in 1687; he was an officer in the British Navy, who resigned the service in 1716, and took up his abode in New York; he became a shipping merchant in the Mediterranean trade, and was a vestryman of Trinity Church from 1731 to 1752. Of his three sons, Andrew was the only one who married; his wife inherited the interests of one of the Lords Proprietors of New Jersey, which has been handed along in the slow process of division to the Hamersley family of the present day. Andrew Hamersley had three sons: 1. William, who was the first professor of the Institute of Medicine at Columbia College, having received his medical degree from Dr. Robertson, the historian, at Edinburgh, and was thirty years connected with the New York hospitals; he married Elizabeth Van Cortlandt De Peyster, and of their two sons, Andrew was a distinguished author, and William was mayor of Hartford. 2. Thomas, a gentleman of great learning, who was pronounced by Lorenzo du Ponte the best Italian scholar in America; he married Susan Watkins, daughter of Colonel John W. Watkins and Judith, fifth daughter of Governor William Livingston of New Jersey. 3. Louis Carré Hamersley, who married in Virginia; his sons are A. Gordon Hamersley, who married Sarah, daughter of John Mason, and John William Hamersley, who married Catharine Livingston, daughter of Judge James and Sarah Helen Hooker of Dutchess County. Mrs. Hooker was the daughter of John Reade, for whom Reade Hoeck (Red Hook) was named, who was the son of Joseph Reade, one of the governor's council (see Vol. I. 756), for whom Reade Street in New York City was named; Lawrence Reade, the father of Joseph Reade, was born and married in England, removing to New York in the early part of the eighteenth century; he was descended from a line of wealthy British noblemen of the name, who for centuries were a power in themselves, Sir

Hosted by Google

paired his fortune, but an inherited estate in the West Indies, from a maternal uncle, Louis Carré, a Huguenot, subsequently retrieved the disaster as far as his children were concerned. He was one of those who made exceptional exertions to alleviate the anguish of the sick and dying prisoners; and he inspired universal confidence through the strength, beauty, and symmetry of his Christian character. His wife was the grand-daughter of Thomas Gordon, son of Sir George Gordon. Thomas Gordon was one of the twenty-seven original Lords Proprietors of East New Jersey; he came to live in this country in 1684, and was made one of the governor's council, and chief justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey. Lord Drummond while in New York was a guest of Andrew Hamersley, and pronounced his household one of the loveliest within the circle of his knowledge.

Military rule in New York was far from being agreeable to her citizens. They felt aggrieved because the courts of justice were closed, and believed that the laws of the land ought to prevail. It was to secure the re-establishment of constitutional civil authority that the petition to the Howes, in the autumn of 1776, was projected by Chief Justice Horsemanden, Judge Ludlow, and others, and signed by nearly one thousand men of all degrees and conditions in life, and of all denominations of Christians. Lord Howe received the delegation who presented it with courtesy, read the petition, and promised to consult his brother, Sir William, who was then in New Jersey with the army. But no answer was ever vouchsafed to the petitioners.[1] It was perceived that

William Reade and Sir Richard Reade being his more immediate ancestors. The mother of Mrs. Hooker was Catharine Livingston, great-granddaughter of the first Lord of Livingston Manor, and granddaughter of Colonel Henry Beekman, "the great patentee" of Dutchess County. The only sister of Mrs. Hooker's mother married Commissary-General Hake, and their only daughter was the mother of Frederick De Peyster, president of the New York Historical Society. One of the sisters of Mrs. Hooker married Nicholas William Stuyvesant; another sister married Philip Kearney. The children of John William Hamersley and Catharine Livingston Hooker are: 1. Mary, died in infancy; 2. James Hooker; 3. Virginia, married Cortlandt De Peyster Field; 4. Helen; 5. Catharine L., married John Henry Livingston, great-grandson of Chancellor Robert R. Livingston.

[1] *Jones's Hist. N. Y.* Vol. II. 116, 117, 118, 433-453. "No single incident in the Revolution," writes De Lancey, "has been more misunderstood, and none more misrepresented, than this attempt of the people of New York to obtain the re-establishment of constitutional civil power in place of military rule." The petition was the first step that could be taken in that direction. The style and language was only that in common use at the time in public documents, and no evidence in itself of "Slavish Submission." Historical writers have through the entire century past spoken of the petition as a "complimentary address," etc., and called the names of the signers the "Black List." "These misrepresentations," continues De Lancey, "it is believed, in case of later writers especially, have been simply the result of mistake and misapprehension of the object and purport of the petition." To the document is attached a certificate from William Waddell and James Downes, who superintended the signing, that the signatures were all affixed voluntarily.

Hosted by Google

the Howes designed to govern by the law military wherever the conquests of the royal army extended, which many of the most intelligent loyalists esteemed a violation of right and inconsistent with the manifest design of the Ministry. Thus the whole city, incorporated by a royal charter, became virtually a garrison town; and the inhabitants writhed under the arbitrary courts erected by the proclamation of a military commander.

During the latter part of September Chief Justice Horsemanden died at his residence in Flatbush, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, and was interred in Trinity Churchyard. At this time numerous New York families whose names have become familiar to the reader occupied country-seats in the fair, rich town of Flatbush, long noted for its pleasant homes; Mayor David Matthews, Augustus Van Cortlandt, Miles Sherbrooke, David Clarkson, Mrs. Van Horne, Jacob Suydam, Major Moncreiff, and Theophylact Bache were among the householders. Captain Alexander Graydon, taken prisoner at the surrender of Fort Washington, was billeted upon the Suydams; and up to the 15th of June, 1778, saw little prospect of an exchange. That night William Mariner, one of the daring spirits of the day, crossed from New Jersey with eleven men, landed at New Utrecht, made a dash upon Flatbush, liberated Graydon, and carried off Major Moncreiff and Mr. Bache, reaching Middletown at six o'clock the next morning. The prisoners were taken to Morristown, and soon after exchanged; the object of their capture having been to obtain the means through which to procure the release of some American officers in the New York prisons.

Sir Henry Clinton sent out several exasperating expeditions from New York in the early autumn, which served to widen the chasm between England and America, and render the present conciliatory system hopeless, whatever might have been its chances under other circumstances. One party crossed into New Jersey and ravaged the country; discovering that a body of Virginia cavalry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Baylor, styled "Mrs. Washington's Guards," were sleeping in barns at Old Tappan, near Hackensack, General Gray, of marauding renown — afterwards Earl Gray — stealthily surrounded them in the night, and with the bayonet slaughtered them indiscriminately, without regard to their naked and defenseless condition or cries for mercy. Three days afterward Tarrytown and the country as far as Dobb's Ferry was overrun by one or two hundred Hessians, who plundered and destroyed everything within their reach, until checked by detachments of Americans under Major Henry Lee and Colonel Richard Butler. Little Egg Harbor, on the eastern coast of New Jersey, was visited about the same time by three hundred British troops and a band of Tory volunteers, under Captain Furguson, and became the

Hosted by Google

scene of a massacre similar to that of the Virginia cavalry. It was a night attack, and fifty of the American infantry were butchered on the spot. On the Long Island shore, about Buzzard Bay, at Fairhaven, and at Martha's Vineyard American vessels were taken or destroyed, storehouses, dwellings, and churches burned, and sheep, oxen, hogs, and horses carried to New York.

Washington's headquarters after leaving White Plains was at Fredericksburg, now Kent, New York, where he gave special attention to repairing the roads and bridges through Connecticut to Boston, in order to facilitate the marching of troops. He was frequently at the house of Colonel Henry Ludington, a large commodious mansion a few miles north of Lake Mahopac, in what is now Kent, Putnam County, then the northern border of the "neutral ground." Colonel Ludington was in command of the militia of the region, and, through his resolute vigilance, performed services of the utmost moment to the country. His troops were in constant requisition to quell the turbulent Tory spirit, repress the vicious lawlessness of the "Cowboys" and "Skinners," intimidate the foraging gangs from New York City, and assist in active operation with the Continental army. His independence of character, sterling integrity, and military skill inspired confidence upon every hand. He had in numerous instances completely thwarted Howe's designs, and a large reward was offered for his capture, dead or alive. His house was surrounded one night by a band of Tories from Quaker Hill, while on their route to join the British in New York, and but for the presence of mind and spirit of his two young daughters, Sibyl and Rebecca, he would undoubtedly have been taken. These fair maidens were keeping watch as sentinels, with guns in their hands on the piazza. They discovered the approach of the foe in time to cause candles lighted in every room, and the few occupants of the house passed and repassed the windows continually. The ruse led the assaulting party to believe the house was strongly guarded, and, hiding behind the trees and fences, they watched until daybreak for signs of repose. Ere it was light enough to discover by whom they had been held in check, they vented their disappointment in unearthly yells and rapidly fled.

Washington found Colonel Ludington a ready and efficient counselor, and together they planned various methods for learning the intentions of the British in New York.[1] Enoch Crosby, the original of Cooper's "Harvey

[1] Colonel Henry Ludington was born in 1739, at Branford, Connecticut. He was the third son of William Ludington, who was descended from the William Ludington who was one of the first settlers of Charlestown, Massachusetts. He married his cousin, Abigail Ludington, and with other members of his family removed to what is now Putnam County, New York. He served in the French war with much credit — was at the battle of Lake

Hosted by Google

Birch," was often admitted to the house for rest and concealment on his adventurous travels; and the regiments and tenantry of Colonel Ludington furnished other successful spies who procured intelligence of great consequence to Washington. The British army was found to be gradually dispersing in different directions. Admiral Byron, the successor of Lord Howe, came and refitted the fleet, and sailed for Boston to entrap, if possible, Count D'Estaing. An expedition was sent to Georgia, and another to the West Indies. Therefore nothing important in the neighborhood of New York would probably be attempted.

Sir Henry Clinton had been ordered to carry the war into the Southern States. The Continental troops of Georgia and the Carolinas were chiefly with the main army at the North, and it was deemed a propitious moment for obtaining possession of their strongholds. The Ministry were in no mood to discontinue hostilities. It was told in Parliament that the Conciliatory Bills had been treated with contempt in America, that the British army had received them with inexpressible indignation, and that the rebel army trod them under their feet, or caused them to be burned by the common hangman. Fox declared it his deliberate opinion that "the dependency of America was no longer a thing to be dreamed of." Burke inveighed bitterly against those who had reduced the nation to such an acme of humiliation. David Hartley moved an address to the king to represent that recent events were such as to call for speedy measures to put a stop to the progress of the war; but it was negatived. The next day he moved another address, praying the king not to prorogue Parliament for the present. He said: "I am very confident that the day will soon come when the house will regret having been so touchy upon every proposition that has but the shadow of American independence. It is want of prudence in the extreme to become more and more attached

George, where his uncle and cousin were killed by his side. He was one of the foremost in espousing the cause of America at the outbreak of hostilities, and received his first commission as colonel from the Provincial Congress, which commission was superseded in May, 1778, by one from Governor George Clinton. His duties were multifarious, never-ceasing, and attended with great danger. His own house was his headquarters throughout the war. He filled many positions of trust, public and private, before and after the war. He served in the legislature of the State, was deputy sheriff of the county, for a long time justice of the peace, and through the whole of an honored life was one of the most public spirited men in that part of the State. He died in 1817. He left six sons and six daughters. His youngest son, Lewis, removed to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1840, and afterwards founded the city of Columbus, in Columbia County, Wisconsin; he died at Kenosha in 1857, aged seventy-two. Among the well-known grandchildren of Colonel Henry Ludington are Ex-Governor Harrison Ludington of Wisconsin, Nelson Ludington of Chicago, James Ludington, founder of the city of Ludington in Michigan, and Charles H. Ludington, of New York City; also Major Edward A. Ogden of the United States army (who died at Fort Riley, Kansas, in 1855), son of Sibyl Ludington, who married the Hon. Edward Ogden.

Hosted by Google

to impossibilities in proportion as they became more evidently such. The Americans, you all know, are, in fact, at this moment independent. If you regret that independence, you have your ministers alone to thank for the event. Your force is now, in all effect, defeated in America. One army entire is taken prisoners; what remains is so far from being adequate for conquest, that I fear it will find great difficulty even to defend itself. The Ministry of this country first introduced foreign forces into the contest. The Americans have now, in their turn, called in a foreign power." After combating for some time with the arguments of those who still insisted upon the possibility of bringing the Americans into their former relations, Hartley submitted certain points to the consideration of the Ministry as the only grounds upon which a negotiation could at present be based: "That the United States be declared independent of Great Britain; that the two countries agree mutually not to enter into any treaty offensive to each other; that an open and free trade and a mutual naturalization be established; and that commissioners be appointed on each part to negotiate a federal alliance between Great Britain and North America." His motion was seconded by Sir George Saville, and warmly supported by Burgoyne, now in his place in Parliament, who in a powerful speech denounced the false policy and incapacity of Lord Germain. One of the stanch adherents of government sprang to his feet and denied all the premises upon which Burgoyne had based his remarks; and contended that, as a prisoner of war, Burgoyne had no right to speak, much less to vote in that house, continuing in a strain of offensive personality until called to order. Fox made an eloquent address in support of the motion, declaring that "the Ministry were as incapable of making peace as of carrying on the war": the motion was, however, ultimately lost upon a division of one hundred and five against fifty-three. The refugees from America, embittered by the advice of Congress to the several states to confiscate their property, thronged the antechamber of the Minister and counseled sanguinary measures to punish and subdue. The king believed the colonies would soon beg for pardon. Clinton was not thus deluded, and although he reluctantly obeyed the peremptory instructions received for the conquest of Georgia, and the service of the West Indies, he wrote to the Secretary of State in December, "Do not, my Lord, let anything be expected of one circumstanced as I am."

Washington established for the winter a line of cantonments around New York from Long Island Sound in the vicinity of Danbury, Connecticut, where Putnam was in command, to the Delaware, choosing Middlebrook, New Jersey, for his own headquarters. By a plan of alarm-signals one post would reinforce another in case of an incursion of the enemy

Hosted by Google

to any particular point; thus comparative security was afforded to the country. General Lincoln was sent by order of Congress to take command of the Southern department.

Lafayette had been lying dangerously ill with a fever for many weeks at the Verplanck Mansion in Fishkill, and during his convalescence in November was preparing to visit France on leave of absence, full of a grand project for the next summer's campaign, which he designed to lay before the cabinet at Versailles. He was closely attended by Dr. John Cochrane,[1] of Washington's staff, the surgeon-general of the hospital of the army, whose wife was Gertrude, the only sister of General Philip Schuyler. Lafayette was fond of him, appreciated his intelligence and force of character, and often called him "The good Doctor Bones," from a song with the somewhat



Dr. John Cochrane.
[From a miniature in possession of his grandson, General John Cochrane.]

[1] Dr. John Cochrane was born in 1730, received a careful education, and finished his medical studies before the breaking out of the French war in 1755. Entering the army as surgeon's mate, he left the service at the close of that war with the character of a skillful and experienced practitioner. In 1776 he offered his services as a volunteer in the hospital department of the American army, and being personally known and admired by Washington, was shortly appointed physician and surgeon-general in the middle department; in October, 1781, Congress appointed him director-general of the hospitals of the United States. When peace was restored he removed his family to New York City, residing at 96 Broadway; he continued on terms of cordial intimacy with Washington as long as he lived, and with the general officers of the army. He had two sons, James Cochrane and Walter L. Cochrane; and a step-daughter, Cornelia, who became the wife of Walter Livingston, the eldest son of Robert, third Lord of Livingston Manor. Walter L. Cochrane was the father of General John Cochrane of New York City, who was graduated from Hamilton College in 1831, was surveyor of the port of New York from 1853 to 1857, member of Congress from 1856 to 1862, attorney-general of the State, and brigadier-general of volunteers in the late war.

Hosted by Google

singular refrain of "Bones," which he would sometimes sing to enliven the tedium of camp life, and which was a never-failing source of amusement to both Washington and Lafayette. A familiar letter from Lafayette to Dr. Cochrane, bearing this endearing sobriquet, is now in possession of the New York Historical Society. The respite from actual fighting gave the officers stationed at West Point and vicinity many idle hours, which they improved in social entertainments. Suppers, followed by music and dancing, were frequent. General Muhlenburg, the clerical Virginia soldier, on one occasion entertained forty guests at a banquet served in the historical dining-room of the Beverley Mansion, opposite West Point. This house had been turned into a military hospital, and Dr. James Thatcher, the author, was quartered there, having been appointed surgeon to the first Virginia regiment, commanded by Colonel George Gibson. He often rode to Fishkill, visiting Dr. Cochrane and others. On one occasion he paid his respects to Lafayette, and describes in his journal the politeness and affability with which he was received, remarking also upon the elegant figure of the young nobleman, the "interesting face of perfect symmetry, and fine, animated, hazel eye." Washington was with Lafayette frequently prior to his departure for Boston, where he embarked in December for France.

The dissensions and party feuds in Congress, together with the startling financial outlook, distressed Washington. He repaired to Philadelphia, where he spent much of the winter in discussing plans for 1779. The army were hutted as at Valley Forge, suffering for food, although better clad than ever before through importations from France. But officers and men were growing impatient with their privations and their pay; while it took one hundred dollars in paper to secure three dollars in specie, they necessarily were laden with debts and their families were starving at home. And to add to the general embarrassments of the situation, skillful artificers were counterfeiting the American bills in London by millions and circulating them in this country. The exchange of prisoners was attended with an endless amount of negotiation and perplexity. Spain just now was apparently using Great Britain as her instrument for bridling the ambition and repressing the growth of the United States; with a true instinct she saw in their coming influence the quickening example which was to break down the barriers of her own colonial system. And clear-sighted Americans perceived with alarm that Congress had lost too many of its strong men, that the body was becoming enfeebled, and that its chief acts were only recommendations and promises; that through the natural course of political development state governments were dearer to the inhabitants than the general government; that the

Hosted by Google

present Congress actually renounced powers of compulsion, and by choice devolved the chief executive acts upon the separate States; and that in point of fact there was scarcely a symbol of national unity except in the highest offices, while there were thirteen distinct sovereignties and thirteen armies. "If the great whole is mismanaged," said Washington, in trying to rouse the country to a sense of the public danger, "it will answer no good purpose to keep the smaller wheels in order." New York was the first State to act in the emergency, and, much as she needed her best men at home, increased her delegation by sending John Jay into the national counsels, who was made president of Congress, Laurens having retired from that office in December.

Upon one great military necessity all were agreed. The Indians of Western New York must be severely chastised; otherwise it was resolved to adhere to a strictly defensive campaign during the coming season. The movement against the powerful savage confederacy was to be something more than a raid for purposes of retaliation. Nothing less than the harshest of treatment and a decided victory, would prevent the tomahawk and its attending horrors from traveling eastward with the spring sunshine. The Six Nations had exerted great influence through more than two centuries of warfare, and had been courted by both England and France, as the reader has learned in former pages of this work. They had been treated with all the consideration ever accorded to powerful governments. They had acquired through intercourse with the whites many of the comforts of civilized life, with enlarged ideas of the advantages of private property. Their populous villages contained castles as well as cabins; the grand council-house at their capital was built of peeled logs two stories high, with gable ends painted red. Their fertile fields and thrifty orchards teemed with corn and fruit. In the beginning of the strife they had engaged to be neutral. But they could not resist the seduction of British presents; and the influence of Sir John Johnson, of the great chieftain Brandt, and of the Tories and desperadoes who in the disguise of Indians besought them to act as guides, with their natural thirst for blood and plunder, had rendered them more ferocious than the wild beasts of the forest. Their shocking cruelties in the rich Wyoming, Mohawk, Schoharie, and Cherry valleys could not be overlooked. An extensive plan of operations was devised. Into the heart of the Indian country Sullivan was to lead an expedition, marching by the Susquehanna; General James Clinton, his second in command, was to join him after penetrating the Indian country by the Mohawk River; and a third division was to proceed by the Alleghany River. So important was the success of these movements esteemed, that Governor George Clinton

Hosted by Google

intended to accompany the troops until the last moment, but was prevented by the State affairs. The New Hampshire and Massachusetts regiments were commanded by General Enoch Poor, and the Pennsylvania brigades by General Hand. This army altogether amounted to about five thousand men.

The anniversary of the alliance with France was celebrated in camp shortly after Washington returned to headquarters. An elegant dinner was given by General Knox and the officers of artillery to the commander-in-chief, who with Mrs. Washington, the principal officers of the army and their ladies, and a number of the prominent personages of New Jersey, formed a brilliant assemblage. In the evening there was a curious display of fire-works and a ball opened by Washington with Mrs. Knox for his partner. Not long afterward a party of British troops crossed into New Jersey at midnight, under orders to capture Governor Livingston. His wife and daughters had returned to "Liberty Hall" in the autumn, and the governor was now at home; a farmer's son, on a fleet horse without saddle or bridle, brought tidings of the enemy's approach, and he had barely time to make his escape. His valuable correspondence with Washington and other documents were crowded by his daughter Susan into the box of a sulky and taken to an upper room.[1] Then she stepped out upon the roof of a little porch over the door to watch for the coming of the redcoats. The day was just dawning when they suddenly appeared in full view, and a horseman dashed forward and begged her to retire lest some of the soldiers from a distance mistake her for a man and fire at her. She attempted in vain to climb in at the window, although it had been easy enough to step out; and an officer, seeing her dilemma, sprang from his horse, ran into the house, and gallantly lifted her through the casement. She was a handsome young woman of magnetic presence, and turning to thank her preserver, inquired to whom she was indebted for the courtesy. "Lord Cathcart," was the reply. "And will you protect a little box which contains my own personal property?" she asked with quick earnestness; then added more quietly, "if you wish I will unlock the library, and you may have all my father's papers."

A guard was instantly placed over the box, while the house was ransacked. A large quantity of old law papers were stuffed into the sacks of the Hessians, who cut the balusters of the stairs in anger when they found themselves checked in the work they had come so far to perform. They

[1] Miss Susan Livingston subsequently married John Cleve Symmes, the eminent jurist, who was member of Congress, judge of the Supreme Court of New Jersey, chief justice in 1788, appointed judge of the Northwest Territory, and was the founder of the settlements in the Miami country. Their daughter became the wife of President William Henry Harrison.

Hosted by Google

were gratified, however, in the matter of burning and plundering several other houses, and retreated with speed to Staten Island closely pursued by Maxwell's brigade, with the loss of a few men on both sides.

The British aim through 1779 was to inflict as much misery as possible upon the inhabitants of America. The war was prosecuted in Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas, without any distinct or decisive object, in numerous small encounters, and with varying success. Virginia was ravaged by a force under General Matthews, her two chief commercial cities, Portsmouth and Norfolk, sacked, the town of Suffolk wantonly plundered and burned, public and private property indiscriminately destroyed all along the track of the invaders, who spent twenty-one days in the employment, and then returned to New York laden with the spoils. On the 30th of May, Sir Henry Clinton commanded an expedition which sailed up the Hudson River and captured the two opposite posts, Verplanck's Point and Stony Point, which were in no condition to resist the army of more than six thousand men. Washington drew his troops suddenly from their cantonments and placed them in such positions above Stony Point that the British general was discouraged from attempting anything further, and leaving strong garrisons in his newly acquired fortresses, he returned to New York.

Baron Steuben established his headquarters in June at the Verplanck Mansion, which, standing amid fine lawns and gardens, a short distance from the village of Fishkill, with patches of primeval forest on either hand, overlooked the Hudson some half a mile from the water's edge. By rapid marches through Pompton and the Ramapo valley the troops under St. Clair, Lord Stirling, and Baron De Kalb, were drawn from Middlebrook and well posted near West Point. Putnam was placed in command at Smith's Clove, while Washington's head- June.
quarters were at Newburgh. Numerous regiments were scattered along the eastern bank of the Hudson to guard the passes, it being supposed that the British would soon attempt to carry West Point. Washington was frequently at Fishkill, and with the baron reviewed the various sections of the army; the remarkable degree of adroitness to which both officers and soldiers had attained in their evolutions was gratifying. The silence maintained during the performance of their manœuvres astonished experienced French generals. "I don't know whence noise should proceed, when even my brigadiers dare not open their mouths but to repeat the orders," exclaimed Steuben in reply to certain admiring comments.

The Verplanck Mansion was built in the early part of the eighteenth century, upon property which has been in the possession of the Ver-

Hosted by Google

plancks since 1682, when Gulian Verplanck and Francis Rombouts bought seventy-six thousand acres of land of the Indians. Long prior to the Revolution wheat had been shipped from this place to France and exchanged for pure wine, with which the vaults of the dwelling were well stocked. It was a roomy, comfortable home, and the foreign noblemen who enjoyed its shelter were charmed with its abundant resources for substantial comfort. The house is still preserved, with all its antique peculiarities; the very chairs used during the war are cherished with tender reverence. The new and larger part, revealed in the sketch, is at least seventy-five years old. The Verplancks are one of the oldest as well as one of the most honorable of the New York families of Holland origin; the



Verplanck House, Fishkill.

first of the name settled on the lower point of Manhattan Island when it was only a little fur-station; and in every generation since that primitive period they have had their good and gifted men. Samuel Verplanck married Judith Crommelin, the daughter of a wealthy Huguenot in Amsterdam, and resided in a large yellow house in Wall Street, corner of Broad, which was the home, after the Revolution, of his distinguished son, Judge Daniel Crommelin Verplanck, who married Ann Walton. These latter were the parents of Gulian Verplanck, so well-known in the political, social, and literary life of modern New York, and to all lovers of Shakespeare.

While the flowers were nodding in the June breezes, Sir Henry Clinton and his suite were journeying over the roads of Long Island to review the troops stationed at Southampton. An escorting party rode in advance, helping themselves to everything which could be conveniently turned to

Hosted by Google

account on the route, and when the exasperated inhabitants remonstrated they were cursed for rebels. July opened with an expedition into Connecticut, the object of which was in part to draw Washington's attention from West Point. A fleet of forty-six sail, manned by two thousand sailors, bore Tryon with three thousand troops into Long Island Sound. It was not moving against any fortified post, but as General Parsons aptly wrote, "to execute vengeance upon rebellious women and formidable hosts of boys and girls."

On the morning of July 5 it anchored at the entrance to the harbor of New Haven, and its military passengers landed at both East and West Haven. It was not yet daylight when the city was roused with alarm-guns and the ringing of church-bells. President Stiles says in his diary, that he sent off his daughters on foot to Mount Carmel, placed the college records and a quantity of colonial papers in charge of his youngest son to carry three miles, dispatched a one-horse load of bags of clothing in one direction, a second load of four mattresses and a trunk, immediately following, sent his son Isaac to overtake his sisters with a carriage, and rode himself on horseback to various points, stirring up the militia; his eldest son, Ezra, was with a band of college students, who formed on the green under Captain James Hillhouse, when suddenly Colonel Aaron Burr dashed in among them and offered himself as their leader. He had risen from a sick-bed to which he had been confined some days, and after conducting his aunt, a daughter of President Edwards, to a place of safety, spurred to the aid of whoever would contest the progress of the enemy. Joined by such of the militia as could be rallied in haste, the young heroes boldly proceeded to meet and harass the invaders, delaying them for priceless hours. The venerable ex-President Daggett of Yale (who had been professor of divinity twenty-five years) mounted his horse and with fowling-piece in hand rode down into the face of the enemy, encouraging the students by his example as well as words; when the party under Hillhouse fell back he remained where he had been stationed in a little copse, and continued loading and discharging his musket. "What are you doing there, you old fool?" called out an officer in the van of the British column, astonished at seeing a single individual in clerical costume firing at a whole regiment. "Exercising the rights of war," said the professor. In an instant bayonets were at his breast; "If I let you go this time will you ever fire at the king's troops again?" was asked. "Nothing more likely," was the prompt reply. Blows and gashes followed, but the life so firmly jeopardized was spared; the professor gave his name and station as one of the officers of Yale College, and was told that he had been "praying against

July 5.

Hosted by Google

the king's cause," which he admitted. He was placed in front of the column, and at the point of the bayonet compelled to lead the way to a bridge, two miles north of one which had just been demolished over West River, and thus to the college green, where he fainted from the excessive heat of the day, and loss of blood, and was carried into the house of a friend. He died a few months later in consequence of his wounds. About one o'clock in the afternoon the enemy reached the heart of New Haven, having burned several houses on their way (of which was the old stone manor-house of the Morrises), and mercilessly killed a number of citizens in their own dwellings, among whom was Deacon Nathan Beers. Sir Henry Clinton had instructed Tryon to do his business quickly, and the troops, nothing loth, sacked New Haven without delay; what could not be carried off was viciously destroyed — windows and furniture were broken, beds torn open, and occupants of houses abused and insulted. Cellars were everywhere visited and rum drank to excess. At eight in the evening the soldiers were so intoxicated as to be withdrawn with difficulty, the greater part who could walk reeling in the line, and carts, wagons, and even wheelbarrows necessary to transport the rest to the boats. Tryon paused at Beacon Hill, and at midnight wrote to Clinton, "The rebels are following us with cannon, and heavier than what we have." By sunrise the next morning the enemy were on the Sound again, having burned all the storehouses on the wharf, seven vessels, and many houses and barns. They had killed twenty-one men besides those who subsequently died of their wounds, and carried away between twenty and thirty prisoners. Tryon wrote that he "had a little difficulty with the rebels, and had lost eighty in killed and wounded." Among those who so resolutely disputed his advance were Dr. Levi Ives, the father of Professor Eli Ives of Yale, Mr. Rutherford Trowbridge, David Atwater, Simon Sperry,[1] and other men of influence who shouldered their muskets and joined the party under Hillhouse.

July 7. On Wednesday, the 7th, Tryon landed at Fairfield and stripped every dwelling and burned the whole beautiful town. A community so cultivated as well as prosperous had not in that day its parallel in England. Three churches, ninety-seven dwellings, a handsome court-house and jail, two school-houses, sixty-seven barns, and forty-eight stores and shops were reduced to ashes. Green's Farms, five

[1] Simon Sperry was descended from Richard Sperry, who was notable in colonial history for supplying food to the regicides, Goffe and Whalley, and who lived in the famous old moated manor-house approached by a causeway leading across his estate from the river in the beautiful and picturesque town of Woodbridge. Simon Sperry was the grandfather of ex-Mayor Sperry, and of the Hon. N. D. Sperry of New Haven.

Hosted by Google

or six miles distant, was plundered, fifteen houses burned, including the dwelling of the minister, Rev. Mr. Ripley, and the church, eleven barns, and several stores. The militia attacked the invaders and very much shortened their stay. They re-embarked on the 8th and sailed across the Sound to Huntington, to rest and recruit for further ignoble exploits.

On the following Saturday the cloud of sails was once more moving toward the Connecticut shore. Norwalk was doomed. The enemy landed Sunday morning. Tryon took possession of a small hill, where with chairs and a table he sat writing his orders and overseeing the destruction of the town. The inhabitants fled to the mountains, taking such valuables as they could carry. The old Benedict homestead, which had been in the possession of the family since the first settlement of the town, was not burned at first, but consigned to the flames as the British were retiring, which were happily extinguished through the efforts of a negro slave who had concealed himself in the bushes near by. Mrs. Mary Benedict Philipse, the wife of Ebenezer Philipse, mounted her horse and drove a number of cattle before her into the country. One hundred and thirty-five houses were burned, including the old mansions of Governor Fitch and Nathaniel Raymond, together with two churches, eighty-nine barns, forty stores and shops, five vessels, and four mills. Six houses only were left standing. July 11.

The militia, who rallied, interposed some opposition, but they were few in numbers, and the British force was strong. Wolcott and Parsons came forward rapidly from the vicinity of the Hudson, arriving the next morning.

In the mean time Sir Henry Clinton had withdrawn from Verplanck's Point all the troops not strictly destined for the garrison, with whom, in addition to several thousand others, he advanced to the heights near Marmaroneck, not far from the Connecticut line, in order to co-operate with Tryon should Washington march eastward; from this point he sent troops to burn the towns of Bedford, Salem, and North Castle, not even sparing their places of public worship. But a surprise was being prepared for the British commanders, which brought them suddenly to New York, and stayed further destruction upon the Connecticut coast.

A design upon Stony Point was culminating, which for its daring, and its combination of skill, prudence, foresight, careful attention to details, and absolute obedience on the part of the men concerned, and its conspicuous success, was one of the most brilliant achievements of the war. Washington selected a body of light infantry for this critical service from the various regiments of North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. The New York and New Jersey forces were chiefly on their way into the Indian country with Sullivan.

Hosted by Google

Every field officer chosen had proved his ability and valor on former occasions. The leadership was assigned to Anthony Wayne, a handsome, impetuous, magnetic, dashing Pennsylvanian of thirty-four, styled "Dandy Wayne" among his companions because of his fastidious notions about dress. He said he had "rather risk his life and reputation at the head of the same men in an attack clothed and appointed as he wished, with a single charge of ammunition, than to take them as they appeared in common, with sixty rounds of cartridges"; and Washington evidently sympathized with his tastes and gratified them to the extent of his narrow means. Under Wayne were Colonels Richard Butler and Udney Hay of Pennsylvania, Colonel Christian Febiger, and the gallant De Fleury, who afterwards became field marshal of France, commanding Virginians, Major John Steward of Maryland, Colonel Return Jonathan Meigs of Sagg Harbor fame, Colonel Isaac Sherman, son of Roger Sherman of New Haven, Major William Hull, uncle of Commodore Hull of the *Constitution*, and Major Hardy Murfree, the pioneer of Murfreesborough, Tennessee, with two North Carolina companies.

The arrangements were conducted with the utmost secrecy. At noon on Thursday, July 15, Wayne and his noble twelve hundred left Sandy Beach, fourteen miles above Stony Point, and marched over the roughest of roads and pathways, the column stretched out the greater part of the way in single file. At eight in the evening they halted a mile and a half from the fort, and the officers reconnoitered. Midnight was the time fixed for the attack. The men lounged by the roadside three hours and a half in silence, under the enforced penalty of instant death. At half past eleven the time was up, and a whispered call quivered along the line. Each man knew the watchword, and bore upon his cap a patch of white paper to save him from his friends. They advanced with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets. Whoever should attempt to load his piece without orders was to be put to death on the spot by the officer next him. Two columns were to break into the fort from nearly opposite points in silence, doing their work with the bayonet, while Murfree and his North Carolinians were to take position in front and draw attention to themselves by a rapid and continuous fire. Wayne led the right column, spear in hand, Butler the left. They were discovered by the pickets, and every man in the garrison was up, completely dressed, and at his proper station. Stony Point was a bold, rocky peninsula nearly two hundred feet high, jutting out into and bounded on three sides by the river, and almost isolated from the land by a marsh, which, it being high tide, was now two feet under water. From the formidable breastworks on the summit thundered gun after gun while yet the assaulters were

Hosted by Google

wading the stream. But they faltered not. Up the hill they ran, the bellowing cannon in their faces, and the musket-balls whistling around their ears. Every officer performed his part to the letter. One and another fell. The brave Colonel Hay was wounded in the thigh. Ezra Selden of Lyme, a handsome young officer fresh from Yale at the opening of the war, received a wellnigh fatal wound in the side, but he made his way into the fort. Wayne, with every sense alive, balancing all chances and duties while apparently wild with the fierce outcry which fired the veins of his men, fell backward with a wound in his head; but he rallied and directed his two aids to carry him along, and in five minutes more the whole party were rushing into the fort through every embrasure, and a thousand tongues let loose repeated the cry, "The fort's our own!"

The astonished Britons fell back into the corners of the fort under the terrible charge; De Fleury, first in, hauled down the flags, Sherman of Connecticut rushed over the space and grasped Butler of Pennsylvania by the hand as he climbed in from the north. Murfree came upon a run from the marsh, leaping in to join in the glory; and the surrender of the whole garrison was immediate. Tradition says that the enemy fell upon their knees, crying, "Mercy, dear Americans! Mercy!" However they may have asked for quarter, from the moment the cry was heard every bayonet was uplifted and not a man was hurt thereafter. July 16. The commander came forward and delivered up his sword, and a line was thrown around the prisoners, numbering five hundred and forty-six; some fifty-eight had jumped down the rocks in the darkness and escaped, and the killed and wounded numbered ninety-four. Fifteen Americans were killed, and six officers and seventy-seven privates wounded. The whole action occupied only twenty minutes after the first shot.

The cheers that rent the air with one common impulse were answered by the British ships in the river, and the garrison at Verplanck's Point opposite. "Ha, the fools think we are beaten!" exclaimed an officer; and the guns were whirled round riverward, and the fiery story was told in such language as compelled the ships to slip their cables and drop down the river in sullen silence. Washington's original idea had been to attack Verplanck's Point simultaneously, but he modified his plan so far as to attempt only a feint, conducted by Colonel Rufus Putnam, who alarmed that garrison the moment he heard firing across the river, effectually preventing any effort to aid Stony Point, and withdrew from the vicinity in the morning. The total value of the ordnance and stores captured by Wayne was estimated at over one hundred and eighty thousand dollars. The news of the event spread swiftly over the country, and the heroic band was everywhere applauded. Even the enemy lavished encomiums

Hosted by Google

upon the professional skill with which extraordinary difficulties were surmounted, and the high soldierly qualities of the storming party. "It was worth a dukedom," writes Joseph Roswell Hawley, "to have been even a private there that night."

Washington did not attempt to retain Stony Point, as it was too far advanced from his main army; he simply removed the stores and artillery, burned the barracks, and demolished and evacuated the fortress. Sir Henry Clinton, who at the time was in possession of the whole county of Westchester, employing men, protected by detachments of soldiers, to cut the hay from all the farms in the region, retreated with the first news rapidly to New York, calling in his haymakers and their covering parties. He doubtless expected a descent upon the city. Learning, however, that Stony Point had been abandoned, he took possession the second time, and rebuilt and garrisoned the fort; but in the month of November withdrew his forces from both Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, and demolished the works. Washington then took peaceable and final possession, and rebuilt and garrisoned them.

While America was proudly rejoicing over the exploit of Wayne, a quiet wedding occurred at Baskenridge, New Jersey. William Duer, who had been so prominent in the New York Congress, and a member of the Continental Congress, was married to Lady Kitty, daughter of Lord Stirling. John Jay escaped from his duties at Philadelphia, and with his wife graced the occasion; the mansion swarmed with the relatives of the family, many bright and winsome belles were present, and several army officers.

July 27.

In the midst of the banquet which followed, the situation of Paulus Hook was discussed. Attached to Lord Stirling's command was the young and daring Henry Lee, afterwards governor of Virginia, who sought to attack the British post at that point, which had been held by the enemy with great tenacity since 1776, and was in reality the only safe spot on the Jersey shore for their marauding parties to land. Lord Stirling favored Lee's project, but Washington hesitated for a time, deeming the attempt too hazardous. Permission was finally obtained from the commander-in-chief, and Lord Stirling, with five hundred men, moved down to the Hackensack bridge to be in position to cover Lee's retreat if necessary. With about three hundred infantry and a troop of dismounted dragoons, Lee boldly swooped down upon the post in the night with such celerity, address, and vigor, that he captured one hundred and fifty-nine men, with the loss of only two killed and three wounded. He had been directed to make no effort to hold the position, and returned safely with his prisoners to the American lines. This auda-

Aug. 19.

Hosted by Google

cious achievement, within sight of New York and almost within the reach of its guns, was very galling to the British officers. Great praise was awarded to Lee for his spirited and prudent conduct of the enterprise, and especially for his humanity.

Ten days later Sullivan gained a victory over the Indians under Brandt, who was assisted by Sir John and Colonel Guy Johnson, and the two Butlers; they had thrown up breastworks and intrenchments half a mile long at Newtown, where the city of Elmira now stands. Aug. 29. The conflict was not of long duration. The enemy were outflanked, and, scattering, fled. Indians and Tories alike made their way to Niagara, one of the strong points which Washington most desired to possess, but which was not attacked, to the great disappointment of both Washington and Congress. Sullivan visited a terrible retribution upon the savages for their havoc and slaughter of 1778. Forty towns were destroyed. Not a cabin nor a roof from the Genesee valley to the Susquehanna was left standing. Their homes, their orchards, their crops, their possessions, were all annihilated. The manifest inability of England to protect them inclined the Six Nations ultimately to desire neutrality.

Sir Henry Clinton was disconcerted and surly as one batch of disagreeable news after another reached him in New York City. The loyalists criticised his acts and his inaction, which did not improve his temper. In October a rumor that the French squadron was about to unite with Washington in an attack upon the metropolis induced him to order the evacuation of Rhode Island, and the troops, in hastening to New York, left all the wood and forage collected for six thousand men during the winter behind them. The post was immediately occupied by a body of American troops. Clinton learned finally that Count D'Estaing had abandoned the siege of Savannah and retired to the West Indies. The Southern campaign had been novel and exciting, ever presenting splendid prospects, sometimes to one side, sometimes to the other, and turning at the moment of anticipated success into bitter disappointment. Clinton himself sailed late in December, under the convoy of Admiral Arbuthnot, with seven thousand men, to operate against Charleston, South Carolina, leaving Knyphausen in command of New York.

Washington's headquarters were at West Point during the autumn. Here he welcomed Luzerne, the new minister from France, who had recently landed at Boston, and was on a circuitous route to Philadelphia. "He was polite enough," said Washington, "to condescend to appear pleased with our Spartan living." Prior to the advent of the French dignitary, Washington invited Mrs. Dr. Cochrane and Mrs. Walter Livingston to dine with him, and in a humorous letter to the doctor apprised them of their prospective fare. He wrote: —

Hosted by Google

"Since our arrival at this happy spot, we have had a ham, sometimes a shoulder of bacon, to grace the head of the table; a piece of roast beef adorns the foot; and a dish of beans or greens decorates the center. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, which I presume will be the case to-morrow, we have two beefsteak pies, or dishes of crabs in addition, one on each side of the center dish, to reduce the distance between dish and dish to about six feet, which without them would be about twelve feet apart. Of late he has had the surprising sagacity to discover that apples will make pies, and it is a question, if, in the violence of his efforts, we do not get one of apples instead of having both of beefsteak. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates once tin but now iron (not become so by the labor of scouring), I shall be happy to see them."

The increasing difficulties in the way of providing for the army threatened the most alarming consequences. Every branch of trade was unsettled and deranged, and the price of every commodity rising in proportion as the paper money depreciated in value. Liabilities to the enormous amount of two hundred millions of this currency had been issued, and no portion of it was redeemed. Every remedy adopted proved impracticable or aggravated the evil. A delegation from Congress dining with the officers of the army one autumn day, Robert Morris, of the party, was bewailing the miserable condition of the treasury. Baron Steuben exclaimed: —

"But are you not financier? Why do you not create funds?"

"I have done all I can; it is not possible for me to do more," replied Morris.

"And yet you remain financier without finances?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, I do not think you are as honest a man as my cook. He came to me one day and said, 'Baron, I am your cook, and you have nothing to cook but a piece of lean beef which is hung up by a string before the fire. Your negro wagoner can turn the string as well as I can; you have promised me ten dollars a month; but as you have nothing to cook I wish to be discharged and no longer chargeable to you.' That was an honest fellow, Morris."

In the mean time Spain had entered into a secret alliance with France against England, and war was waged in various quarters of the globe. The intelligence reached Congress while that body was deliberating upon the instructions to be given to ambassadors, who in connection with French statesmen were to negotiate a treaty of peace with England as opportunity might arise. John Adams, who had returned from his French mission in the same vessel with Luzerne, was chosen, and authorized to

Hosted by Google

act as negotiator, proceeding again to Paris. And although Spain had not yet acknowledged the independence of the United States, John Jay, the President of Congress, was dispatched as minister plenipotentiary to the Court of Madrid, to accomplish a direct alliance if possible with that power. He sailed on a few days' notice, October 10, accompanied by his wife, and her brother, Brockholst Livingston, as his private secretary. M. Gerard returned home in the same vessel.

The year closed gloomily for England. Lord Gower and Lord Weymouth, disapproving of the continued struggle with America, retired from the government. The Earl of Coventry lamented in the House of Lords that a war so fatal to Great Britian should ever have been begun, and declared that if the propositions he had made during the last session of Parliament had been regarded, England would have been at that hour at peace with America. In the House of Commons great heat was exhibited. Fox caustically asked, "What has become of the American war?" The king, it seems, had not even mentioned it in his speech at the opening of the autumn session. "Is the war totally extinct, like the war of ancient Troy?" continued Fox, referring to that silence. "What produced the French rescript and the French war? What produced the Spanish manifesto and the Spanish war? What has wasted forty millions of money and sixty thousand lives? What has armed forty-two thousand men in Ireland with arguments carried on the points of forty-two thousand bayonets? For what is England about to incur an additional debt of twelve or fourteen millions the ensuing year? Is it not that accursed, diabolical, and cruel American war?"

The American army went into winter-quarters at Morristown, log-huts being erected, as at Valley Forge and Middlebrook. It was a season of great severity. The snow, for four months, averaged from four to six feet deep. The bay of New York was frozen over so firmly that two hundred sleighs laden with provisions, with two horses each, escorted by two hundred light horse, passed over it from New York to Staten Island in a body. Loaded teams crossed the Hudson on the ice at Paulus Hook, and all the rivers, creeks, harbors, ports, and brooks were frozen solid in every direction. The shivering soldiers almost perished for want of proper food, and were alternately without bread or meat, and sometimes destitute of both. Washington and his military family occupied the Ford Mansion, and at each end of the house an addition was made of logs, one for a kitchen and the other for an office. Late in December Mrs. Washington arrived, riding a spirited horse, and escorted by a guard of Virginia troops, having for two days braved the perils of a terrible storm of wind and snow. She remained at headquarters until spring.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1780-1783.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE WAR.

SIGNIFICANCE OF EVENTS. — NEW YORK CITY IN 1780. — FORAYS INTO NEW JERSEY. — CAMP LIFE AT MORRISTOWN. — ALEXANDER HAMILTON. — ELIZABETH SCHUYLER. — ARNOLD UNDER A CLOUD. — RETURN OF LAFAYETTE. — CAPTURE OF CHARLESTON. — BURNING OF CONNECTICUT FARMS. — BATTLE OF SPRINGFIELD. — SIR HENRY CLINTON AT EASTHAMPTON. — TREASON OF ARNOLD. — AARON BURR. — EXECUTION OF ANDRÉ. — UNPOPULARITY OF THE WAR IN ENGLAND. — CORRESPONDENCE OF HARTLEY AND FRANKLIN. — THE FRENCH ARMY. — COUNT ROCHAMBEAU. — WASHINGTON AT DOBB'S FERRY. — THE CONFLICT AT THE SOUTH. — BURNING OF NEW LONDON. — SURRENDER OF LORD CORNWALLIS. — MARAUDING PARTIES. — SIR GUY CARLETON. — PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. — SUSPENSION OF HOSTILITIES. — SIGNING THE DEFINITIVE TREATY OF PEACE. — DAVID HARTLEY. — THE CINCINNATI. — THE EVACUATION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK BY THE BRITISH. — GRAND ENTRY OF THE AMERICAN ARMY.

THE value of events can never be seen while they are transpiring. It is only in the calm light of their influences that they may be properly estimated. Great affairs oftentimes take their rise from small circumstances. The philosophers, politicians, and warriors of the Revolution, astute, wary, and stubborn as we find them, had little conception of the magnitude of their undertaking. Here and there were original minds, comprehensible and flexible enough to become the founders of a nation. Others, equally fervid by intensity of conviction, and imbued with a certain wise, strong sense of diplomacy, were masters of the situation only through the sweep of vast impulses behind them. The future was uncertain. No electric cable supplied at evening the policy for the next morning. The leaders of thought and the leaders of armies were alike groping in a dense cloud. Soldiers sleeping in the snow with a fire at their feet, and spending cold, wintry days in idly repining over hardship and inaction, knew not that they were working out results so grand that time would but add to their luster in all the centuries to come. In that severe school was a continual dramatic movement. Standards of duty, rules of action, and habits of thinking destined to impart a tinge and a

Hosted by Google

flavor to the broader culture and sweeter disposition of later days, were constantly bursting into life. And although the knowledge was withheld from the actors and sufferers in the projection of the national structure, we know that within one hundred years it has grown to a place in the front rank of great nations.

The city of New York, where the government of our Union was shortly to receive the first pulsations of existence, and where more than elsewhere its benefits are now seen, was the central point around which the chief events of the Revolution revolved. The years during which the main body of the American army hovered in significant proximity — almost within sight of her steeples — were fraught with all the romance which belongs to the mediæval struggles of European races. The fortunes of her citizens were as varied as any conceit of the most vivid imagination. Within her stately mansions the officers of King George lived like princes, and within her harbor the fleets anchored which were to terrify the whole Southern seaboard; while just beyond the waters that laved her western shores every hill-top and tree was like a watchful sentinel. No military movement in any direction could be executed without discovery, save under the cover of midnight darkness. Washington's spies passed in and out of the city despite the utmost vigilance. And Washington himself, with unerring sagacity, remained among the fastnesses of New Jersey, with his eye upon Manhattan Island, while he detached regiment after regiment of his best troops for the support of the South.

As the winter advanced the inhabitants of the metropolis were distressed for firewood and food to a degree never before experienced. The snow was so deep that forest-trees could hardly be extricated from their native wilds after being felled. Ornamental and fruit trees were attacked, and before spring the streets and lanes, gardens and grounds, were shorn of their treasures. Wall Street surrendered some of its beautiful shade trees, more than a century old, to be converted into fuel for the family of General Riedesel. The baroness writes: "We were often obliged to borrow wood of General Tryon for Saturday and Sunday, which we would return on Monday if we received any." The poor burned fat to cook their meals. Provisions were alarmingly scarce, and so costly as to exhaust the means of the wealthiest. Fifty dollars would not feed a family two days. In vain the British generals entreated the farmers of Long Island and vicinity to bring their produce to market; and foraging parties were equally unsuccessful; for the country people buried meat, corn, oats, and vegetables beneath the snow on the first intimation of their approach, and hied to the mountains, carrying old family furniture beyond their reach. In their rage at finding barns empty, cattle gone, and farm-houses

Hosted by Google

deserted, the foragers applied the torch and desolated whole districts, thus increasing not only the general misery, but the determination of America to be free.

To add to the cheerlessness of New York, the men-of-war in the bay were immovably ice-bound, and an army with its heaviest artillery and baggage might at any moment cross the Hudson on the ice. Knyphausen expected Washington, and took measures accordingly. Refugees and loyalists formed themselves into military companies and were subjected to garrison duty. But the Americans at Morristown were in no condition to take advantage of the opportunity for a descent upon the city. The whistling winds were drifting snow above their heads, their garments were worn and thin, and many of the men had no shoes. The utmost discomfort prevailed even at headquarters. "Eighteen of my family," wrote Washington, "and all of Mrs. Ford's are crowded together in her kitchen, and scarce one of them able to speak for the colds they have caught." The distress for provision became so appalling that an appeal was made to the people of New Jersey direct, who responded nobly. Colonel Matthias Ogden collected cattle and grain in Essex County, and the temporary relief afforded induced Washington, about the middle of January, to give some twenty-five hundred of his best overcoated troops a little exercise. An expedition to Staten Island was placed under the command of Lord Stirling, the object being to capture a British encampment. Five hundred sleds and sleighs were procured to convey the party to Elizabeth, whence they crossed on the ice in the night from De Hart's Point; but the enemy, apprised of their approach, were strongly fortified, and intrenched behind an abatis of snow ten feet high, therefore an attack was deemed unjustifiable. After remaining twenty-four hours on the island, the Americans withdrew, with five hundred or more frozen ears and hands, and a quantity of blankets and stores. At Decker's Ferry they captured and destroyed nine sailing-vessels, and took a few prisoners. Some of the men had disobeyed their superiors and committed depredations upon the residents of Staten Island, for which they suffered severe punishment. Lord Stirling required all stolen property returned to Rev. James Caldwell of Elizabeth, who was to return it to the owners. Washington, who had in general orders warned the whole army against robbing the inhabitants on any pretext whatever, taught wholesome moral lessons by his treatment of incorrigible offenders. Thatcher says in his journal that death was inflicted, in some aggravated instances, for the crime of robbery, but that the penalty usually, after a fair trial, and conviction by a court-martial, was public whipping, in keeping with the practice of the times in both England and America.

Jan. 15.

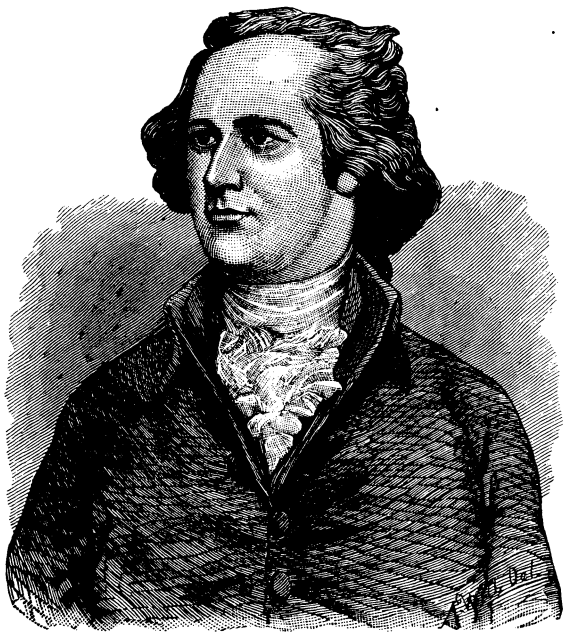
Hosted by Google

Ten days later the British crossed the ice in the night, one party visiting Newark, and another entering Elizabeth about the same hour. The Newark Academy, on the upper green, was burned, several houses plundered, and thirty-four prisoners taken, among whom was Judge Joseph Hedden, one of the Committee of Public Safety, whom they compelled to walk to Paulus Hook in his night-shirt; he died a few days subsequently in consequence of the exposure. At Elizabeth the court-house and the Presbyterian Church were burned, a number of dwellings plundered, and a few prominent men carried off as prisoners. The guard, under Major Eccles, numbering about sixty, was captured on the start. The guides of the enemy were natives of Elizabeth, familiar with all the roads, and knew all the residents of the town. Jan. 25.

Washington sent General St. Clair on the 27th to investigate the situation, and re-establish guards along the shore of the frozen waters of the bay. But in spite of all precautions Rahway was visited on the 30th by a band of refugees, and a pleasure-party broken up without warning. Eight men were seized and carried off, several young ladies robbed of all their jewelry, and among other trophies three handsome sleighs and ten fine horses were taken to New York City on the ice. On the 10th of February another foray into Elizabeth by a circuitous route resulted in the capture of five or six citizens, and the plundering of as many good houses, of which were the old mansion of Governor Belcher, and the residence of William Peartree Smith and his son-in-law, Elisha Boudinot, who were fortunately out of town. The war, degenerating into midnight robberies, had trained and let loose upon society a class of murderous thieves, who, under the cover of British protection and the pretense of serving the king, furnished a chapter of horrors which could never be forgotten by the people of that generation. It was impossible to guard the whole long stretch of shore, and while the ice lasted the nights seemed chiefly devoted to barbarous raids. At Morristown the utmost precaution against a surprise was maintained. Pickets were thrown out towards the Hudson and the Raritan, and the firing of a gun in the distance would be answered by discharges along the whole line of sentinels to the camp and headquarters. On such occasions Washington's life-guard, commanded by William Colfax, grandfather of Schuyler Colfax, housed in log-huts near at hand, would rush to the Ford Mansion, barricade the doors, and throw up the windows; five, with muskets ready for action, were generally stationed at every window behind drawn curtains, until the troops from camp could be assembled and the cause of the alarm discovered. Mrs. Washington and the other ladies were obliged to lie in bed, sometimes for hours, with their rooms filled with guards, and the keen wintry winds blowing through the house.

Hosted by Google

As the intensity of the cold abated, and supplies became more abundant, the spirits of the army revived. The youthful Alexander Hamilton was the life of Washington's household. He had been aide-de-camp and secretary to the commander-in-chief since March, 1777, and had won special favor and confidence. His Scotch strength and French vivacity, his graceful manners and witty speeches, were a perpetual attraction. His figure was slight, erect, and expressive, his complexion boyishly fair, and his features lighted with intelligence and sweetness. He wore his powdered hair thrown back from his forehead and cued in the back, and his dress was faultlessly elegant on all occasions. He presided at the head of Washington's table, and was usually the smallest as well as the youngest man present. Washington sat upon one side, with Mrs. Washington at his right hand. Hamilton had already evinced exceptional aptitude for the solution of financial problems, and the originality of his opinions induced the general belief that he possessed the highest order of genius. As an individual he probably inspired warmer attachments among his friends and more bitter hatred from his foes than any other man in New York history.



Alexander Hamilton.
[From the painting by Trumbull in possession of the Chamber of Commerce.]

An event occurred in February which colored the whole life of the future statesman and jurist. Elizabeth Schuyler, one of the daughters of General Philip Schuyler, came to Morristown to spend the spring months with her aunt, Mrs. Dr. Cochrane, then residing in a cottage near headquarters. She was a beauty and a belle; small, delicately formed, with a bewitching face illuminated by brilliant black eyes. No young lady of her time had been more carefully educated or more highly bred. Her father's home in Albany had always been the resort of all that was most

Hosted by Google

cultivated and polished in the social life of what Walpole styled "the proud and opulent colony of New York"; and its courtly hospitalities had been from time to time enjoyed by notable representatives of the Old-World aristocracy. She was descended not only from a long line of Schuylers, but from the Van Rensselaers, Van Cortlandts, and Livingstons — the great feudal lords of the Colonial period — which, it being still the age when the distinctions of rank and caste were held in severe respect, lent an added interest to her personal charms. She came like a fresh flower into the dreariness of that winter scene of frost, alarm, and despondency; and Hamilton was presently her devoted lover. Erelong General Philip Schuyler himself arrived at headquarters, the chairman of a committee from Congress, empowered to act in the name of that body for various and definite objects relative to the re-enlistment of troops and the exigencies of the coming campaign, expecting to remain with the army all summer. He was accompanied by Mrs. Schuyler, and with their sanction the youthful pair were betrothed, being married the following December.



Mrs. Alexander Hamilton.
[Elizabeth, daughter of General Philip Schuyler.]

The accomplished Kitty Livingston, daughter of the governor, passed the early part of the winter in Philadelphia, and returned to "Liberty Hall," under the escort of General Schuyler, while on his route to Morristown. She wrote to her sister, Mrs. Jay, in Madrid, of the admiration the wife of Chancellor Livingston — now in Congress — had elicited in Philadelphia, and of her intimacy with Mrs. Robert Morris. She said Colonel Morgan Lewis, who was married in May, 1779, at Clermont, to Gertrude, the sister of Chancellor Livingston, had purchased a house in

Hosted by Google

Albany; and that Lady Mary and Robert Watts had rented Mrs. Richard Montgomery's farm for two years, in order to leave New York City. She described the French Minister, his secretary, M. Marbois, and a Spanish dignitary, Don Juan de Miralles, all of whom had wagered that Mrs. Jay used paint to produce the brilliancy of her complexion, and that she would go to plays on Sunday while in Spain. Even the Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, while pronouncing Mrs. Jay a philosopher, had intimated to the piquant Miss Kitty that he had been questioned upon the subject of her sister's artificial coloring. A few months later Mrs. Robert Morris wrote to Mrs. Jay that the Chevalier de la Luzerne was convinced of his error, had gracefully acquiesced in the loss of his bet, and had presented Miss Kitty with a handsome dress-cap.

These foreign noblemen visited headquarters in April, and were received with military honors. Washington, accompanied by his staff, and the congressional committee, conducted them to Orange Mountain, to obtain a distant view of New York and the position of the enemy; and, mounted upon splendid horses, with their troop of aids, and servants, they formed a striking cavalcade. Baron Steuben exhibited the discipline and tactics of the troops by a grand review; a large stage was erected in the field, which Thatcher says "was crowded by officers, ladies, and gentlemen of distinction from the country, among whom was Governor Livingston of New Jersey and his lady." This display was followed by a ball in the evening at the Morris Hotel.

April 24.

Arnold had just been tried by a court-martial for his irregular conduct while in command of Philadelphia, and sentenced to a reprimand from the commander-in-chief, which was administered with consummate delicacy. Public opinion was divided in his case. His brilliant, soldierly qualities, and his daring exploits spoke eloquently in his behalf, while his ostentatious and costly style of living, with his debts and his government accounts yet unsettled, had excited suspicions of his integrity. He had occupied one of the finest houses in the Quaker City, indulged in a chariot and four, given splendid entertainments, and was known to have made temporary use of the public moneys passing through his hands. He had courted and married Margaret, the daughter of Edward Shippen, afterwards Chief Justice of Pennsylvania, and it was known that the family were not well affected to the American cause. In the exercise of his military functions he had become involved in disputes with the State government, and lost forever the confidence of that body. Nothing fraudulent was proved against him, but his course was pronounced imprudent and reprehensible. He now appeared before the public a soldier crippled in its service, seeking a new appointment; and Wash-

Hosted by Google

ington, knowing his abilities, was disposed in his favor. He subsequently obtained the important command of West Point.

On the 12th of May, the same day that Sir Henry Clinton captured the army under General Lincoln at Charleston, Lafayette arrived at Morristown by way of Boston, and met with a rapturous greeting from the entire army. Washington folded him in his arms with profound emotion. There was something singularly impressive in the enthusiastic devotion of this young French nobleman to a doubtful cause, in a far distant land. His second coming was the more welcome since it had been generally predicted that he would never return. He brought the glad tidings of a French army already upon the Atlantic, sent to aid America in the ensuing campaign. Remaining at headquarters but one day, he hastened to Philadelphia, as he was charged with messages from his government to Congress. May 12.

By no one was he received with more cordial grace than the brilliant and versatile Gouverneur Morris, who complimented him with one of his characteristic dinners, at which the arts of conversation were displayed to the greatest advantage. Morris was particularly happy in his intercourse with foreigners; he was a man of pleasure, generous, gay, original, sparkling with humor, and polite to a fault, and with his convivial and social qualities was united a marvelous genius for affairs. But like his Morris ancestry, with whom the reader is familiar, he abounded in whimsical peculiarities. He owned a famous pair of gray horses, which, when brought to the door in front of his stylish phaeton, he insisted, with immoderate expletives, should stand unrestrained by either groom or rein while he mounted to his seat. The next morning, after the banquet given to Lafayette, they ran away with him, throwing him upon the Philadelphia pavement with such violence that his leg was broken, and subsequently amputated just below the knee. It was esteemed an "irreparable misfortune," and sympathy was extended from every quarter. The day after the accident a clerical friend called to offer consolation, and dwelt at some length upon the good effects which the melancholy event would be likely to produce upon the moral character of a young man, when Morris interrupted him with the remark, "My good sir, you argue the matter so handsomely, and point out so clearly the advantage of being without legs, that I am almost tempted to part with the other."

It was three or four months before he was able to leave his room, and his quick preceptions, fertility of resources, and energetic counsels were severely missed by Congress in that crisis. The machinery of credit, paper circulation, and forced certificates, had run its race, and was about tumbling into ruins; the impending danger to the whole national fabric

Digitized by Google

was manifest to all, while how to avert it was the problem no one yet could solve. Congress adopted vigorous resolutions for raising money and troops, and the State governments made laws, but the execution of either was attended with innumerable delays. Individuals contributed largely to the public funds; and ladies in various parts of the country started subscriptions for the relief of the army. In the mean time there was a famine. The soldiers had no bread. Washington knew not which way to turn. New Jersey was exhausted through the long residence of the army. New York by legislative coercion had given all she could spare from the subsistence of her inhabitants. Virginia was sufficiently taxed to supply the South. Maryland and Delaware had made great exertion, and might perhaps do more. Pennsylvania was represented as full of flour, and Washington finally made a powerful appeal to Joseph Reed, president of her executive council. "All our departments are without money or credit, all our operations are at a stand," he wrote; "the patience of the soldiery is wearing out, and we see in every line of the army features of mutiny and sedition. Any idea you can form of our distress will fall short of the reality. We can no longer drudge on in the old way. Unless a new system, very different from that which has a long time prevailed be immediately adopted throughout the States, our affairs must soon become desperate beyond the possibility of economy." His letter procured supplies, but not on flying railway trains; ere laden wagons moved slowly across the country, two Connecticut regiments paraded under arms, announcing their resolve to return home or procure food at the point of the bayonet. No other man than Washington could have grappled with and overcome these difficulties. He not only retained the mutineers in service, but restrained them with discipline, managing with such consummate discretion as to command their affection while winning the confidence of the whole country.

May 28. On the 28th of May the official report of the surrender of Charleston was received at headquarters. About the same time New Jersey refugees in New York City represented to Knyphausen that the troops under Washington were hopelessly discontented and mutinous, and that the inhabitants of New Jersey had become so tired of the vexatious compulsory requisitions for the support of the army, that they would seize the opportunity to throw off their allegiance to Congress if a British force was sent to their assistance. Believing this, the German veteran ordered nineteen regiments into the much-afflicted State across

June 6. the Hudson. They sailed to Staten Island on the 6th of June, crossing in the night to Elizabethtown Point. Early the next morning the whole force was in motion, commanded by Knyphausen.

Digitized by Google

The sun was rising in a clear sky as the "Queen's Rangers," a splendid body of dragoons, mounted on very large and beautiful horses, with drawn swords and glittering helms, entered the village of Elizabeth, followed by the infantry, "every man clad in new uniforms, complete in panoply, and gorgeous with burnished brass and polished steel." The whole body numbered six thousand.

But the proud leaders soon discovered their mistake. If the people had murmured because of the exactions of Washington, they had never thought of abandoning the cause of their country. The militia were everywhere out in small parties to oppose them, and the fences and the bushes were ablaze with musketry. The brigadier who commanded the van was unhorsed with a fractured thigh while yet in Elizabeth, and the column was harassed all the way to Connecticut Farms, a distance of seven miles. The troops of the enemy were kept in perfect order during the march, committing no deeds of violence. General Maxwell withdrew his brigade towards Springfield, making a stand on the rising ground back of the Farms' village, and again on the east side of the Rahway River; he was joined by Colonel Elias Dayton, who had retired from Elizabeth before the enemy, to their great annoyance. In the afternoon the militia flocked to the defense from all quarters, and the fighting was perpetual. In the midst of his chagrin at the turn events were taking, Knyphausen learned that Washington, hearing of the invasion, had thrown his whole force into the strong post of Short Hills; it was also apparent that the mutinous disposition of the American army had vanished as soon as distress — not disaffection — had ceased to affect the mind. As night approached, heavy clouds loomed up in the western sky. A retreat was ordered, and at ten in the evening the whole pompous array of horse and foot and flying artillery retrod their route of the morning, in strict silence, and in the midst of a drenching thunder-storm. They had distinguished themselves by plundering and burning the little village of Connecticut Farms, and by murdering the lovely wife of Rev. James Caldwell. "Nothing more awful than this retreat can be imagined," wrote one of Knyphausen's guards, "the rain, with the terrible thunder and lightning, the darkness of the night, the houses at Connecticut Farms in a blaze, the dead bodies, which the light of the fire or the lightning showed now and then on the road, and the dread of the enemy, completed the scene of horror. It thundered and lightened so severely as to frighten the horses, and once or twice the whole army halted, being deprived of sight for a time. General Knyphausen's horse started so as to throw the general."

The Rev. Mr. Caldwell had been pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth until the edifice was burned by the British, and his position on

Hosted by Google

the great questions at issue was a matter of public notoriety; he was also chaplain of a New Jersey regiment. His wife was Hannah Ogden, the daughter of Judge John and Hannah Sayre Ogden of Newark.[1] She was the mother of nine children. The circumstances of her murder are variously stated. Her husband had entreated her in the morning to seek a place of greater safety than the little parsonage, but she thought that her presence might serve to protect the house from pillage. She was in a back room, holding an infant in her arms, attended by her maid, when a soldier jumped over the fence into the yard and fired his musket at her through the window, killing her instantly. Whether it was an act of personal malice or otherwise, it shocked the whole American people, and rendered the British name more execrable than ever.

At "Liberty Hall" the wife and daughters of Governor Livingston spent the day in speechless terror, as the British troops passed in front of their residence, and they could hear the guns and see the flames rising from the church and dwellings at Connecticut Farms. Late in the evening some British officers rushed in to take shelter from the storm, and finally decided to remain until morning; thus assured of safety, the family retired. About midnight they were startled by a sudden commotion about the house, caused by the departure of the officers who were hurried off by unexpected news. Soon afterward a band of drunken or vagabond hangers-on to the army broke into the mansion, swearing they would "burn down the rebel house." The frightened ladies locked themselves into a chamber, but their whereabouts were quickly discovered and the door attacked. As it was likely to give way before their blows, one of the governor's daughters resolutely opened it; a ruffian grasped her arm, and she with the quickness of thought seized his collar; at that instant a flash of lightning illumined the scene, and the fellow staggered back in a scared manner, thinking it the ghost of the murdered Mrs. Caldwell whom he saw before him! An old neighbor was presently recognized among the men, to whom the ladies appealed, and through his intervention the house was cleared of the marauders.

[1] Judge John Ogden was the brother of Colonel Josiah Ogden, who founded the Episcopal Church of Newark, and of Rev. Uzal Ogden, D. D., its first rector. He was the son of David Ogden, who was the son of the David Ogden who married Elizabeth Swaine, widow of Josiah Ward, the lady whose foot first rested upon Newark soil when the town was settled, himself the son of John Ogden, one of the principal founders of Elizabeth. The Ogdens were among the most wealthy and influential families of New Jersey, but were divided on the question of independence. Judge David Ogden of Newark, who had recently been commissioned chief justice of the province by the King, a cousin of Mrs. Caldwell's father, was in New York with his family, counseling with the enemy, and retired to Nova Scotia at the close of the war.

Hosted by Google

The governor was at Trenton at the time of the invasion, overwhelmed with public duties of the most perplexing character; and, aware that Knyphausen had within a month offered large inducements for his capture, he had little expectation that his house would be spared. The enemy remained at Elizabethtown Point waiting for Clinton, who having left Lord Cornwallis in command of South Carolina, with instructions to invade North Carolina as soon as circumstances would permit, was on his route to New York. Two days after his arrival he visited New Jersey, and expressed his disapproval of the movement of Knyphausen. The only objects sufficient to warrant such an expedition were the stores at Morristown and the capture of the American army. The prospect of success was not promising, and he resolved to withdraw the troops; but he chose to mask his retreat by a feint, and to give it the air of a military manœuvre. Washington, discovering that a bridge of boats to Staten Island was in readiness for the return of the British army, suspected that a design upon West Point was in contemplation, and immediately strengthened his forces in the Highlands, confiding the post at Short Hills to the command of Greene. Early on the morning of June 23d the British, five thousand strong, with ten or twenty field-pieces, swiftly advanced towards Springfield. They reached Connecticut Farms about sunrise, from whence they diverged in two compact columns, one by a circuitous route to the North through Milburn, the other directly over the Rahway River. Major Henry Lee, with his dragoons, supported by Colonel Aaron Ogden, took post at Little's Bridge on the Vauxhall road, while Colonel Dayton, aided by Colonel Angell, opposed the left column. There was a sharp contest at both points; the right column was compelled to ford the river before it could drive Lee and Ogden from their position, although their force was small. At the lower bridge the left column was held in check for forty minutes. During the heat of the battle Rev. Mr. Caldwell galloped to the church near by, and brought back an armful of psalm-books to supply the men with wadding for their firelocks, exclaiming, as he handed them round, "Now put Watts into them, boys!" Greene's command was extended over the mountains, to guard the different passes, and he hastily prepared for action. The enemy, having gained the village, saw little hope of proceeding further, and while manœuvring with their cannon plundered the houses and burned the town. The church and nineteen dwelling-houses were destroyed. Four habitations only were spared, and those were occupied by their wounded. Then they retreated with almost as much celerity as they had advanced; the militia, maddened by the sight of their burning homes, pursued them with an incessant fire the whole

June 19.

June 23.

Hosted by Google

distance to Elizabethtown Point. They immediately crossed to Staten Island, and by midnight their bridge of boats was removed.

It was shortly apparent that Sir Henry Clinton had no present intention of navigating the Hudson. The fleet under Admiral Arbuthnot cast anchor in Gardiner's Bay. Why the British army, twice as large as its adversary, did not strike some grand blow puzzled many a brain. But Clinton had a scheme in view which he believed would end the war. Benedict Arnold had been in his pay upwards of a year, and at specified rates furnished material intelligence. If Benedict Arnold succeeded in obtaining the command of West Point, the whole American army could be purchased from his hand. The only question at issue was that of price. Lord Germain was cognizant of the ignoble plot, and promised that all expenses would be cheerfully defrayed. He wrote to Clinton in September, 1779, that next to the destruction of Washington's army the gaining over influential officers would be the speediest means of subduing the rebellion.

Meanwhile two important events occurred. Congress, regardless of the views of Washington, placed Gates on the 13th of June in command of the Southern department; and the French fleet, with Rochambeau and one division of his army, entered the harbor of Newport on the 10th of July. Washington took post at Tappan, opposite Dobb's Ferry.

Clinton, while waiting for the development of Arnold's treachery, made a journey by land to Easthampton, the extreme eastern point of Long Island, ostensibly to confer with the Admiral as to the policy of an attack upon the French at Rhode Island, but in reality to enjoy a few weeks of sportive recreation. He was accompanied by his favorite aide-de-camp, Major André, and several officers of high rank, including Lord Percy[1]

[1] Lord Percy was Hugh, eldest son of Sir Hugh Smithson, Baronet, who assumed the surname of Percy on his marriage to Lady Elizabeth Seymour, only child of the Duke of Somerset, and by act of Parliament was created Earl Percy and Duke of Northumberland October 22, 1766. Lord Percy, so well known in New York, became in 1786 second Duke of Northumberland. His brother, James Smithson, founded, through a bequest of $515,169, the Smithsonian Institute at Washington, for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge among men"; he took an honorary degree at Oxford in 1786 (the same year that Hugh became a duke), and devoted his life to scholarship, often saying that his name would outlive those of his family who possessed inherited titles and honors only. The Smithsons were of England's proudest nobility, dating back to the eleventh century, holding large estates, and conspicuous in all the generations for intellectual strength. The titles and dignities of Knight and Baronet were conferred upon Sir Hugh Smithson in 1660. The first Duke of Northumberland was the fourth Baronet in the direct line. Lord Percy's son Hugh became third Duke of Northumberland in 1817; he was succeeded as fourth Duke by his brother Algernon, the late Viceroy of Ireland, in 1847. The present Duke of Northumberland is a Smithson, although not in the direct descent from Lord Percy, and his galaxy of armorial bearings, representing the distinguished alliances of his ancestry, number nearly nine hun-

Hosted by Google

and Lord Cathcart. Sir William Erskine was in command of Eastern Long Island, with headquarters at Southampton, but Sir Henry and his suite were billeted upon Colonel Abraham Gardiner, whose mansion at Easthampton was the largest and finest in the region; its garret had a trap-door, and was used to confine prisoners. The chief pastime of the party was deer-hunting.[1] The son of their host, Dr. Nathaniel Gardiner, surgeon of a New Hampshire regiment, came home on a furlough during their stay, cutting his visit short, however, when he discovered the character of his father's guests. The family thought his presence their own secret until the morning following his departure, when Major André expressed his regret at not having been able to make the acquaintance of the young surgeon, as, had he done so, duty would have obliged him to cause his arrest as a spy. A messenger appeared one rainy August morning with a letter from Arnold, and before noon Sir Henry was on his route to the city. André, upon leaving, exchanged wineglasses with Colonel Gardiner, taking two from his camp-chest, and receiving two from the table in return. These mementos are still preserved by the family.[2]

America quivered with disappointment as the summer slipped by without military movements. Washington's feeble army was unprepared to act with the French immediately upon their arrival; and the second division of Rochambeau's army were blockaded by the British at Brest, and unable to cross the Atlantic. The idle troops of the king amused themselves with forays into the country, and the patriots injured the enemy whenever they had an opportunity. Now and then daring exploits were planned and executed for the relief of prisoners, as in the case of General Silliman and Judge Jones, the historian. The former was captured by a party of refugees at his house in Fairfield, May, 1779, and carried to New York. There being no officer in possession of the Americans whom the British would accept in exchange for Silliman, a bold and successful expedition into Long Island was projected in November for the capture of Judge Jones, who was residing quietly at his country-seat, at Fort Neck, and he was taken to the home of Mrs. Silliman, thence to Middletown. It was the 27th of April, 1780, before the

dred, among which are those of several younger branches of the Royal family of England, the sovereign houses of France, Castile, Leon, and Scotland, and the ducal house of Normandy and Brittany — heraldic honors almost without a parallel.

[1] See Vol. I. 596.

[2] David Gardiner, the grandson of Colonel Abraham Gardiner, was several years in public life; he was killed by the explosion of a gun opposite Mount Vernon in 1844, while on a pleasure-trip by invitation of the President. Two cabinet ministers and three other distinguished gentlemen were instantly killed at the same time, and the six were buried from the Executive Mansion. A few months afterward Julia, the beautiful daughter of David Gardiner, was married to John Tyler, President of the United States.

Hosted by Google

exchange was finally effected, and both gentlemen restored to their families. A volume might be filled with the thrilling incidents, hair-breadth escapes, and harrowing trials of the people within fifty miles of the metropolis during this period of inaction. The neutrals suffered more if possible than the violent partisans, being persecuted by both parties. Washington's forces were changing along the Hudson like a kaleidoscope. Baron Steuben had wrought wonders. Every man and every horse knew his place and his duty. Such was the perfection of detail in the regulations that the whole army, occupying an extent of several miles, could be put in motion and take up the line of march in less than an hour. The season was sickly, great dearth of food was frequent, the ranks were thin, and nearly every man had a grievance. But a hopeful spirit was maintained through the judicious policy of Washington, who, whatever his forebodings, never lost self-command. He was essentially aided by Greene, whose character and bearing created confidence and enthusiasm. Lord Stirling was another officer whose example was a perpetual source of strength and inspiration; the troops were proud of his martial appearance, and boastfully compared his courtly dignity with the brusque mannerism of many foreign generals, although the laugh occasionally went round at his expense on account of his supposed ambition of the title of lordship; the story was told, how, at the execution of a soldier for desertion, the poor criminal called out, "Lord, have mercy on me!" and Stirling responded with warmth, "I won't, you rascal! I won't have mercy on you." The elegant dragoons of Colonel Henry Lee were the admiration of the army; not England herself could exhibit a better-disciplined, more stylishly equipped, or finer-looking body than these gallant Virginians. And the lively concern evinced by the French affected the rank and file of the American army like a charm.

Eager expectation, however, succeeded suddenly to deep despondency. News came from South Carolina early in September that Gates had been totally defeated on the 19th of August by Lord Cornwallis in a general action near Camden, with the loss of forty-eight American officers, and that the brave Baron De Kalb had been killed while leading the Maryland and Delaware troops into battle. This mortifying disaster opened the eyes of Congress at last to the fact that a man could be a skillful intriguer and yet no soldier. In the midst of the general sorrow the army paid the final tribute of respect to the amiable and popular General Enoch Poor, who had died of fever. On the 17th Washington, accompanied by Lafayette and Hamilton, left headquarters for Hartford, to meet and confer with Rochambeau and his generals, who were to ride to that point from Rhode Island. Arnold proceeded in his barge to meet

Hosted by Google

Washington at King's Ferry, crossing the Hudson in full view of the *Vulture*, anchored below. He was in possession of a letter concerning the property opposite West Point which had been confiscated to the State of New York; and he urged in vain for permission to receive an agent from Colonel Beverley Robinson, its former owner, on the subject. Hamilton said it was strange that Robinson should attempt to confer with a military officer upon a question belonging to the civil authority alone! Lafayette in a tone of pleasantry asked Arnold to ascertain as soon as possible — since he was in correspondence with the enemy — what had become of the French squadron so anxiously expected. Had Washington consented to Arnold's appeal, the conference with André would have been conducted under a flag of truce, seemingly authorized by the commander-in-chief.

No event in modern history has been more discussed than the treason of Benedict Arnold. The character of the man who could deliberately undertake to destroy the life of a nation at a stipulated price is a curious study. He seems to have possessed exceptional will-power, unlimited audacity, tolerable acquirements, an excitable imagination, a cold heart, inordinate selfishness, singularly captivating manners, great personal magnetism, an irritable temper, and a cruel disposition. He excelled in a certain order of military ability, but lacked all the moral qualities which go to make the hero. His patriotism was a splendid piece of deception from first to last. He plunged into the Revolution as he would have dashed into a jungle for game, with an eye to the rewards. He had no sense of duty or military honor. He was capable of taking the most solemn oath with the full intention of perjury in his soul. He could lead brave men up to the cannon's mouth with an irresistible fascination, and then coolly turn round and sell them bodily, with all they held dear on earth, to the enemy. The plea that he was driven to the perpetration of an unpardonable crime by a series of acts of injustice has no basis in point of fact. He was angered by his failure to extort money from Congress which he claimed as his due, and became nearly furious when charged by the civil authorities of Philadelphia with resorting to improper means to obtain money. But under the assumption of injured innocence he was striving to hide an already maturing criminal scheme of overwhelming magnitude. Had he ever been a man of honor, worthy of high trusts, no wrongs could have driven him into forgetfulness of the supreme sanctity of obligations. A glimmer of the blackness of his nature was discernible in all stages of his career, and now he was to make his final plunge into everlasting infamy.

The picture of Arnold hastening to bring about the comtemplated meeting with André while Washington was in Hartford is one of the

Hosted by Google

most dark and repulsive of the Revolution. The preliminaries were all arranged; the interview was to close the bargain. Arnold had intimated in a letter to Clinton, August 30, that "speculation might be made with ready money." At midnight of the 21st, Arnold sat upon his horse among the fir-trees at the foot of a shadowy hill on the west side of the Hudson, in waiting attitude. A boat with muffled oars approached cautiously from the *Vulture*, and André presently stepped forth, wrapped in a blue cloak. Arnold received him politely, and the two conversed until day-break. Their business not being completed, they rode through Haverstraw village to the house of Joshua Hett Smith, whose family were absent.

Sept. 22. Here they concluded arrangements. Arnold was to distribute the garrison at West Point in such a manner as to destroy its efficiency. Clinton was to bring his army to the siege in person, and it was decided in what manner to surprise the reinforcement which Washington would doubtless himself conduct. Arnold returned in his barge; while André, with sketches of the routes and passes which were to be left unguarded, together with a plan of the fortifications of West Point, and the number of the garrison, cannon, and stores, all in the handwriting of Arnold, crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry in the night, conducted by Smith, and commenced his journey to New York by land. The *Vulture* had been obliged to shift her anchorage during the day through the sharp fire of a party of Americans; thus Smith refused to risk the attempt to row André back to the sloop of war, but accompanied him on horseback as far as Pine's Bridge over the Croton River. About an hour before noon on the 23d, when just above Tarrytown, André was stopped by three men, and the fatal papers were discovered in his stockings; despite his magnanimous bids for release, he was taken to North Castle and delivered to the commandant of that post, who was induced by him to dispatch an express to Arnold with intelligence of his capture.

Washington, returning from Hartford, where nothing had been settled in the way of future operations for lack of superiority at sea, changed his route to spend the night in Fishkill. The next morning he was in the saddle early, and sent a messenger in advance to inform Mrs. Arnold that he should do himself the pleasure of breakfasting with her. When within a mile of "Beverley," he turned aside to inspect some redoubts, two of the aids galloping forward to the house with a message from him that the meal should not be delayed.

Arnold and his family accordingly gathered at the breakfast-table. The traitor was not in a happy mood. Washington's presence sooner than anticipated was inopportune, to say the least. This was the very day for the ships of Clinton, ready and waiting for André, to ascend the

Hosted by Google

river. Suddenly a horseman rode into the door-yard, and Arnold received the letter with information of André's capture, and that the papers found upon his person had been forwarded to Washington on the road from Hartford. Thus the mine which Arnold had prepared for others was about to explode under his own feet. With superlative self-control he remarked that he had been summoned to West Point, beckoned his wife from the table for a word in private, ordered the messenger to keep silence, on pain of death, and leaping upon the fellow's horse dashed down the slope to his barge, and escaped. The communication had missed Washington because of his change of route, but he received it on his return from West Point later in the morning. The revelation was appalling. Hamilton was sent upon a fleet horse to order the guns at Verplanck's Point turned upon Arnold's barge; but he had already passed in safety, and was on board the *Vulture*. The extent of the treason being unknown, an alarm was sounded in every division of the army; at three o'clock next morning Greene held the entire force at Tappan in waiting to march at a moment's warning. An unspeakable disgust took possession of the American soul as the facts came to light; and the man who had so nearly sold for a paltry sum of money all that had been won through labor and hardship, through blood and anguish, through a spirit of heroism and love of country superior to bribery and corruption, was held in universal detestation.

Mrs. Arnold was believed innocent of any knowledge of her husband's crime up to the moment of his flight, and treated in her apparently agonizing distress with the utmost consideration by Washington and his officers. Within a few days she was furnished with a passport and an escort of horse, and started for her father's house in Philadelphia. She stopped on her way in Paramus, at the home of the charming Mrs. Prevost, afterwards Mrs. Aaron Burr, where Colonel Burr was at the time a guest, and is said by him to have given a lively narration of the manner in which she deceived Washington, Hamilton, and others, and personated the outraged and frantic woman. Colonel Burr's relations with the Shippen family had been of the most intimate character from childhood, and he kept Mrs. Arnold's secret until she was past being harmed by the telling of it.

Major André wrote to Washington frankly stating that he was the adjutant-general of the British army, but no spy. He said he had been drawn into a snare, not intending to enter the American lines. But a secret midnight mission in a borrowed garb and under an assumed name, even if he did not intend to subject himself to danger, was not according to the chivalry of modern warfare. He was ordered to "Beverley," and

Hosted by Google

thence conducted by Colonel Tallmadge to Tappan, where on the 29th he was tried before a board of officers consisting of Greene, Lord Stirling, St. Clair, Lafayette, Steuben, Howe, Parsons, James Clinton, Glover, Knox, Stark, Hand, Huntington, and John Lawrence — the judge advocate general — all men of the highest character. Upon his own confession, without the examination of a witness, and after showing him every indulgence, this tribunal reported that he was in effect a spy, and according to the usages of war in all countries should suffer death. On the 30th, Washington approved the sentence and ordered it to be carried into effect. Sir Henry Clinton solicited André's release on the ground of his having been protected by "a flag of truce and passports," but Washington inclosed the report of the board of inquiry, saying, that "Major André was employed in the execution of measures very foreign to flags of truce, and such as they were never meant to authorize." Clinton requested a conference, and sent General Robertson and two civilians to Dobb's Ferry, who were met by General Greene and staff, but Robertson only was allowed to land. He had nothing material to urge except that André was under the sanction of a flag — which was untrue, André having come on shore in the night on business totally incompatible with the nature of of a flag — and spoke of freeing André by an exchange. Greene replied that Arnold, then, must be given up. Robertson absurdly gave Greene an open letter from Arnold, filled with insolent threats of retaliation should André suffer death; this was conveyed to Washington, but ignored with silent contempt. As for André, his fate excited universal commiseration. His virtues and his graces, his youth, his accomplishments, his high position, and his engaging manners rendered him an object of romantic interest. Even Washington was greatly moved. And yet André's errand had been unmistakably to buy with gold what British steel could not conquer; and concealed upon his person had been found the means through which the enormous crime was speedily to have been consummated. His execution took place on the 2d of October; and the general verdict of mankind has been that no man ever suffered death with more justice. The firmness and delicacy with which he was treated won the respect of all nations. Thousands of pens have since paid tributes to his memory. But the civilized mind should have a care about confounding standards of character and conduct. André's mission was neither heroic nor reputable. Honors belong to other enterprises and deeds.

Sept. 29.

Oct. 2.

Arnold's career henceforward was a living death. He took up arms against his countrymen, but was despised and neglected by all true Englishmen. His retribution elicited no pity; and he transmitted to his children a name of hateful celebrity.

Hosted by Google

Sir Henry Clinton shared in the obloquy attending the treasonable conspiracy. He wrote in anguish of spirit to Lord Germain: "Thus ended this proposed plan, from which I had conceived such great hopes and imagined such vast consequences." Germain himself lost public favor through the notoriety of the affair, and the Opposition were materially strengthened. From the day the news of Arnold's treason reached Parliament the war increased in unpopularity throughout England.

New York, the key to the continent, which had hitherto so successfully resisted the shock of armies, and had now narrowly escaped the consequences of insidious operations by an internal foe in league with a powerful foreign enemy, was to taste still further the bitter fruits of war. The work of blood recommenced on a gigantic scale within her northern, central, and western borders. What her people suffered the world can never know. The Tories, who had no future except revenge, and the Indians, who were fighting for their hunting-grounds, marched without baggage by secret paths, never knowing fatigue or wanting for ammunition. Canada and the British forts proved unfailing arsenals, and this terrible enemy inflicted calamities from the recital of which humanity recoils; they could at any moment retreat into the illimitable forests, every foot of which was familiar ground. A sudden irruption from the north, and the two forts, Anne and George, were captured. At the same time Sir John Johnson, with Brandt and a half-savage force, laid waste the fertile valley of the Mohawk. He was defeated by General Van Rensselaer just as Governor Clinton arrived on the scene at the head of the New York militia. General James Clinton was soon appointed to the command of the Northern department. For the next two years the records of New York were stained with fire and blood; whole families and villages were sometimes swept away in a night. Again and again were the enemy driven from the soil by the resolute militia; but discipline and skill were powerless to protect the inhabitants.

Before the year closed Greene, in whom Washington reposed implicit confidence, succeeded Gates in command at the South, where Cornwallis had established a reign of terror. About the same time Major Tallmadge, with eighty dismounted dragoons, crossed the Sound from Fairfield, Connecticut, in the night, marched across Long Island to Fort St. George, at Coram, surprised and captured the garrison, numbering fifty-four men, demolished the fortress, burned two armed vessels, with a large quantity of hay and stores, and returned to Fairfield without the loss of a man. Early in December log huts once more rose all through the mountains around New York City, except on the side towards the sea; the Pennsylvania troops were cantoned near Morris- Nov. 22.

Hosted by Google

town; the New Jersey line about Pompton; the New England divisions at Tappan, in the Highlands, and near the Connecticut shore; and the New-Yorkers at the points of greatest danger, the exposed country near Albany, Saratoga, and on the Mohawk.

No sooner was shelter provided for the army than difficulties culminated. Men shivering in the woods back of West Point were obliged to bring fuel on their backs from a place a mile distant, while on half-allowance of bread and entirely without rum; and they had not been paid for twelve or fourteen months. Thatcher wrote, December 10: "For three days I have not been able to procure food enough to appease my appetite; we are threatened with starvation." Lafayette said: "No European army would suffer the tenth part of what the American troops suffer. It takes citizens to support hunger, nakedness, toil, and the total want of pay." Glover appealed to Massachusetts, December 11: "It is now four days since your line of the army has eaten one mouthful of bread. We have no money, nor will anybody trust us." The same startling cry arose from all quarters. Congress had tried every expedient; but Congress had no powers adequate to the purposes of war. Washington knew this, and urged for a stronger system of government. Hamilton, uncontrolled by inherited attachments for any one State, drinking from the fountain of Washington's ideas, and possessing creative powers, the habit of severe reflection, and the quick impulses as well as the arrogance of youth, took the field as the maker of a national constitution, and wrote to Duane of New York, in Congress, vigorously asserting the
1781. necessity of a confederation. On the first day of January the
Jan. 1. complication of distresses resulted in open mutiny among the soldiers at Morristown. A part of the Pennsylvania line, under the lead of non-commissioned officers, marched with six field-pieces to Princeton, threatening to proceed to Philadelphia and exact redress from Congress. Wayne endeavored to pacify them, and Reed, president of Pennsylvania, repaired to the spot, taking cognizance of their grievances. Sir Henry Clinton was quick to dispatch emissaries to the mutineers, with tempting offers, promising to pay all arrears due them from Congress in cash, without exacting military service in return, if they would come to him; but, resenting the imputation of being Arnolds, they delivered up his messengers to be tried and hanged as spies. Other troops were inclined to mutiny, after the example of the Pennsylvanians, but Washington interposed; a detachment of Massachusetts men marched over mountain roads through deep snows, and suppressed the incipient insurrection.

Doubts, fears, and divided opinions in Congress delayed every proposed change in the manner of transacting national business. Com-

Hosted by Google

mittees, however, were found to be irresponsible bodies, and a partial remedy for existing evils was supplied before spring by the creation of departments. The important office of Secretary of Foreign Affairs fell to the gifted Robert R. Livingston, Chancellor of New York, who executed its novel duties with dignity and ability until the close of the war. Robert Morris was unanimously elected Superintendent of Finance; and one of his first acts was to appoint Gouverneur Morris, of New York, Assistant Financier, who served in that capacity three years and a half. Meanwhile John Laurens, the hero of many a deed of valor, was sent on a special mission to negotiate a loan from France. His father, Henry Laurens, was a prisoner in the Tower of London, the vessel on which he sailed the preceding August, for the purpose of maturing a commercial treaty with Holland, having been taken by the British; his diplomatic and official papers were thrown overboard, but rescued from the water; and as they revealed to Great Britain a private correspondence in progress between Holland and the United States, the result of their capture was a declaration of war against Holland, the ally of a century.

A correspondence was maintained between David Hartley and Dr. Franklin during the whole struggle. Both heartily desired peace. Not only their aims, but their motives, reasonings, and generous sentiments harmonized, and both fully realized that they were dealing with events around which clustered the profoundest emotions and intensest passions of human nature. Hartley acted as a mediator, and with such rare discretion as to exert a marked influence upon the issue of the conflict. "I have been endeavoring to feel pulses for some months, but all is dumb show," he wrote to Franklin in April, 1779. And yet he was successful during the same month in obtaining consent from Lord North to make a mediatorial proposition, as a private person, which might serve as a basis for future negotiations. Lord North thought Franklin would not express his mind freely under such circumstances; but Hartley said "it was possible for Dr. Franklin to consider him (Hartley) a dépôt of any communications which might tend from time to time to facilitate the terms of peace." He feared no misapprehension. His proposal was a truce. Franklin wrote that if the truce was practicable and the peace not, he should favor it, provided the French approved; but only on motives of humanity — to obviate the evils men inflict on men in time of war — being persuaded that America was disposed "to continue the war till England should be reduced to that perfect impotence of mischief which alone could prevail with her to let other nations enjoy "Peace, Liberty, and Safety." Hartley replied: "If the flames of war can be but once extinguished, does not the Atlantic Ocean contain cold water enough

Hosted by Google

to prevent their bursting out again?" He argued that confidence must exist somewhere before the nation could be extricated from the evils attendant upon its national disputes, and warmly assured Franklin that "no fallacious offers of insincerity, nor any pretext for covering secret designs or for obtaining unfair advantage, should ever pass through his hands."

By no means less than these hidden workings of a peace-making spirit, potent influences of a contrary character tended to the same end. Elated with the conquering progress of Cornwallis in the Carolinas, the Ministry encouraged harsh punishments, and commended the transformation of military legions into housebreakers and assassins. The youth and manhood of the South grew every day more defiant under the scourge. Bands of well-mounted horsemen confounded Cornwallis, springing up silently in the very districts he had thought subdued. January was marked by the famous victory of Morgan at the Cowpens. February brought
Jan. 17. the disagreeable conviction to the mind of Cornwallis that he was being outgeneralled in some inexplicable manner. March was signalized by the desperate battle at Guilford Court House, which, without defeating, weakened Cornwallis, and proved the singular capacity of Greene for the execution of great plans. April found Cornwallis moving into Virginia, and Greene carrying out the daring policy of marching to South Carolina and Georgia. May brought tidings to Cornwallis of the loss of several Southern forts through a series of vigorous operations under Henry Lee's invincible dragoons, in conjunction with Marion, Sumter, and Pickens; and, sick at heart, he could not fail to see that his high-handed work of the last year was being rapidly undone.

New York was in dismay. Numbers of her brave sons were serving the king at the South, fighting his battles, whether just or unjust. The garrison of Ninety-Six, composed of New-Yorkers and New-Jerseymen, was commanded by John Harris Cruger, whose beautiful wife, the daughter of Oliver De Lancey, lived in the fort and fared as the soldiers did. The army of Greene ominously increased; the militia flocked in, eager to drive the hated foe from the land. But while New York was seriously affected by exciting events elsewhere, her chief fears were for her own fair island. Threatening storms hung in every part of the horizon. Rumors of a French fleet on the ocean under Count De
May 22. Grasse, and an interview between Washington and Rochambeau at Wethersfield, Connecticut, intensified the general belief that the city was to be attacked. Clinton hastened to erect forts and batteries. He had forwarded detachments to co-operate with Cornwallis in Virginia, but, deceived by letters written to be intercepted, he recalled them for the

Hosted by Google

defense of New York. Cornwallis remonstrated against their departure, having already felt the stings of Steuben, Lafayette, and Wayne — sent by Washington to the State which had generously parted with her own gallant soldiery for the defense of other States beyond — and a significant letter from Lord Germain, applauding Cornwallis, and expressing the king's faith in the Virginia campaign, induced Clinton to direct the troops to remain after they had actually embarked. But he sent no more to Virginia. Early in July Washington suddenly encamped at Dobb's Ferry. The next morning a portion of his army appeared for a short season on the heights above Kingsbridge. On the 6th, the French army reached Dobb's Ferry from Newport. July 4

For seven long summer weeks New York tossed in a tempest of perpetual apprehension. A series of feints kept the British on the alert. Five thousand American and French troops paraded, July 22, on the heights north of Harlem River, their arms flashing in the morning sunshine, the French in white broadcloth uniforms trimmed with green, and the flags of both nations unfolded to the breeze. Scouring-parties cleared the roads and menaced the outer posts of the enemy, while Washington and Rochambeau, attended by numerous officers, a corps of engineers, and an escort of dragoons, deliberately reconnoitered the works on the northern part of Manhattan Island, from the main, as far as the Sound, making notes and diagrams. The two commanders dined on the 23d at the Van Cortlandt Mansion,[1] and returned in the night to Dobb's Ferry, withdrawing their forces from the region of Harlem River, having effected the object of the expedition. Clinton felt assured that Washington contemplated a blow at Staten Island, the possession of which in connection with a strong French naval force would greatly facilitate the operations of a siege; he therefore employed men night and day upon fortifications for its defense. On the 15th of August, Washington inspected the whole length of Manhattan from the heights on the Jersey shore of the Hudson, accompanied by Rochambeau, the Marquis de Chastellux, and a troop of generals and distinguished gentlemen. He rode one of the fine blood horses presented him by the State of Virginia, a beautiful animal which he had himself trained to leap the highest barriers; and the skill with which he overcame the seemingly impassable physical peculiarities of the rough surface of the Palisades was the wonder and admiration of the French noblemen. "He usually," writes Chastellux, "rode very fast, without rising in his stirrup, bearing on the bridle, or suffering his horse to run as if wild." Aug. 15.

Viewing the half-ruined city of New York in the distance, Washington

[1] For sketch of Van Cortlandt Mansion at Kingsbridge (built in 1748), see Vol. I. 697.

Hosted by Google

decided as well and wisely the course which would best contribute to her future greatness, as he could have done had he fully foreseen the glories of the coming century. He would conquer her captors, but in quite another latitude. He ordered extensive encampments marked out, ovens erected for baking bread, forage and boats collected in the recesses along the wall of rocks, and fictitious communications circulated to deceive and bewilder his own army as well as Sir Henry Clinton. "Our situation," writes Thatcher, "reminds me of some theatrical exhibition, where the interest and expectations of the spectators are continually increasing, and where curiosity is wrought to the highest pitch."

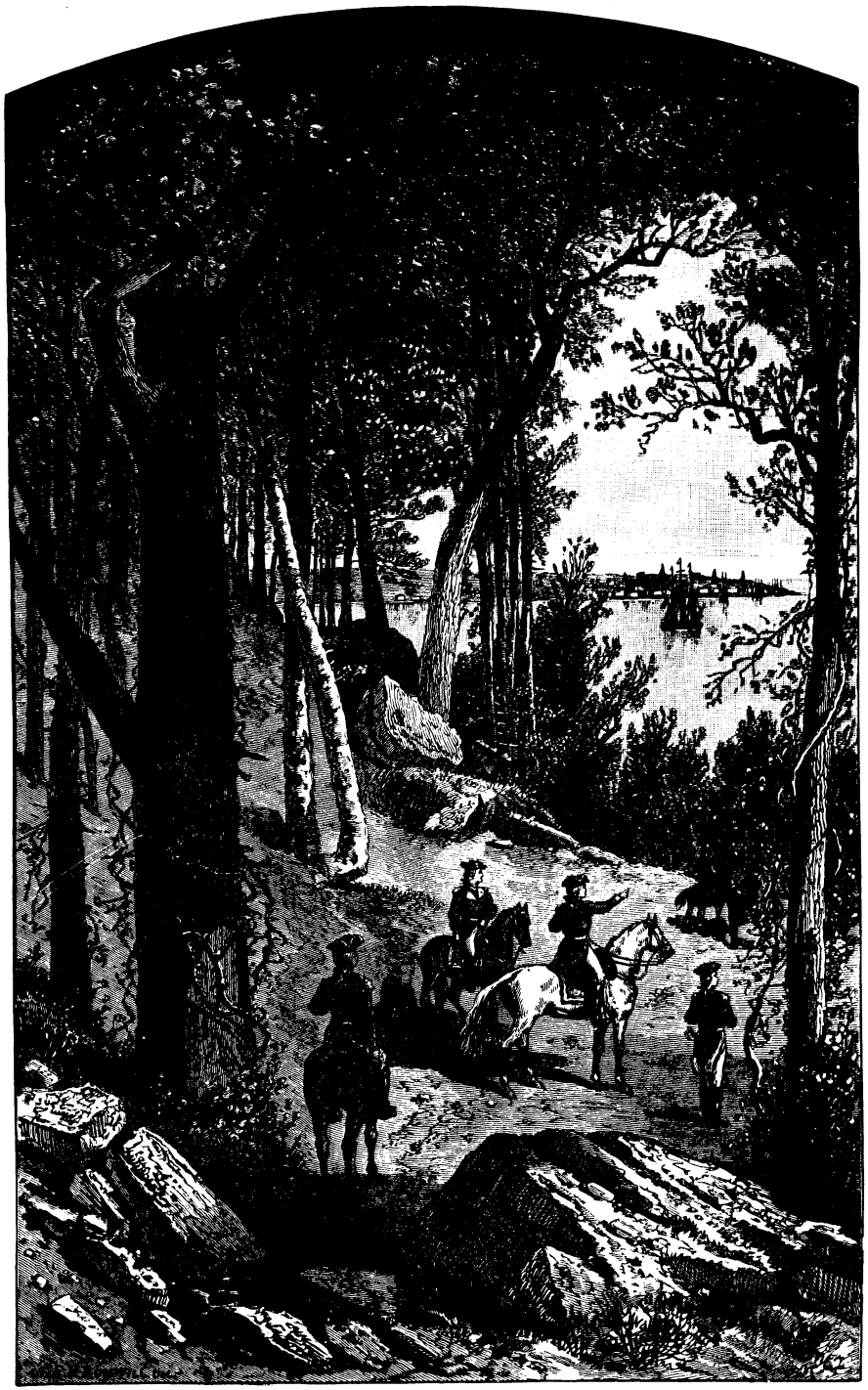
The signal ability with which Washington afforded effectual relief to both New York and Virginia might well excite the applause of mankind. Cornwallis had during the first week in August transferred his whole force to Yorktown, a small village upon an elevation some ninety feet above tide-water, with a level plain of several hundred acres on one side and a bay upon the other where the ships of the line might ride in safety.



Lafayette.

Lafayette, eight miles distant, with a meager force, wrote to Vergennes: "In pursuance of the immense plan of his court, Lord Cornwallis left the two Carolinas exposed, and General Greene has largely profited by it. He now is at York, a very advantageous place for one who has the maritime superiority. If by any chance that superiority should become ours, our little army will participate in successes which will compensate it for a long and fatiguing campaign." At the instance of Washington, De Grasse with twenty-eight ships of the line, and nearly four thousand land troops from the West Indies, entered the Chesapeake and blocked up the York River. The situation of Cornwallis became at once perilous, and Clinton, with a force variously estimated — not less than eighteen thousand — could send him no aid, because of the confidently

Hosted by Google



"Viewing the half-ruined city of New York in the distance, Washington decided as well and wisely the course which would best contribute to her future greatness, as he could have done had he fully foreseen the glories of the coming century." **Pages 253, 254.**

Digitized by Google

Hosted by Google

anticipated siege of New York. While De Grasse was casting anchor Washington broke up his encampment at Dobb's Ferry, and, dexterously throwing out detachments to worry New York and Staten Island, crossed the Hudson with the allied armies, and marched by two routes rapidly through New Jersey. Aug. 19.

It was a masterly manœuvre. The delight of the French was unbounded. The officers under Rochambeau were chiefly young men of rank to whom the service in America was romance. To overcome the reluctance which Northerners might feel as to marching under the burning skies of Virginia in the hottest season of the year, Washington had promised each man a half-month's pay in hard money, having borrowed of Rochambeau twenty thousand dollars in coin, which Robert Morris was to repay by the 1st of October. The 30th was a high day in Philadelphia. About noon Washington and his retinue, including the French generals, entered the city and rode to the residence of Robert Morris, amid the wildest cheers of an enthusiastic multitude upon the streets. In the evening Philadelphia was illuminated. The next day John Laurens came by way of Boston from his mission to France. He brought two and a half millions of livres in cash, being part of a subsidy of six millions of livres granted by the French king. On the 2d of September the American troops passed through Philadelphia, the column extending two miles. On the 3d the French troops, dressed with scrupulous elegance as if for a holiday parade, followed in their footsteps, marching "in single file before the Congress, and Chevalier de la Luzerne, Minister from the Court of France." News of the presence of De Grasse in the Chesapeake, and that three thousand men had landed and joined the forces of Lafayette, reached Philadelphia the same day, creating a whirlwind of joyous excitement. Aug. 30. Sept. 2.

The chagrin of Sir Henry Clinton was beyond expression. Washington's army had crossed the Delaware before the truth broke on his mind. He was accused of stupidity, ignorance, irresolution, indecision, and cowardice, in thus having allowed an enemy to walk away without molestation. No one ventured to criticise his conduct with greater freedom than Arnold, the traitor, who, when sent upon an expedition to Virginia in January, had been attended by two officers, authorized jointly to supersede him and put him in arrest "if they suspected him of any sinister intent." He was pacified with the command of an idle and disgraceful expedition to New London which had little bearing upon the grave question at issue. Its object was to plunder and destroy. Arnold was the man above all others capable of insulting his native State by the wanton desolation of a thriving town only fourteen miles from the place of his

Hosted by Google

birth. With a considerable fleet, and a force of two thousand infantry and three hundred dragoons, chiefly Tories and Hessians, he sailed from New York, and entered New London harbor on the 6th. Forts
Sept 6. Griswold and Trumbull were stormed, taken, and dismantled. Colonel Ledyard, who gallantly defended the former for some forty minutes, was thrust through with his own sword after he had surrendered it to the British officer in command. The garrison received no quarter; seventy-three men were slain in cold blood, and thirty or more severely wounded. The town was pillaged and burnt, and its inhabitants ruined. Arnold returned to New York from this inglorious achievement enriched with the spoils. It was his final appearance on the stage of American affairs.

The very day that New London was in flames, Washington, from the Head of Elk, was writing to De Grasse relative to the prospective capture
Sept. 8. of Cornwallis. Two days later, while Baltimore was celebrating the arrival of Washington in that city, Greene was fighting the bloody battle of Eutaw Springs, which prostrated the British power in South Carolina. On the 9th, Washington rode from Baltimore to Mount Vernon, his beautiful home on the Potomac, which he had not seen in six years. He remained there two days dispensing hospitalities to the illustrious generals of two nations with courtly grace. On the
Sept. 14. 14th he arrived at Williamsburg, twelve miles from Yorktown, where he was welcomed by Lafayette. Energetic preparations were made without delay, and the combined armies marched on the 28th from Williamsburg, encamping in the evening within two miles of Yorktown. By the first of October the line of besiegers formed a semicircle, each end resting on the river; thus the investment of Yorktown by land was complete. On the dark and tempestuous night of the 5th
Oct. 5. trenches were opened with great secrecy six hundred yards from the works of Cornwallis — the Americans working on the right, the French on the left — the whole force commanded by General Lincoln, whose most efficient aide-de-camp was Matthew Clarkson of New York. Within three days the parallel nearly two miles long was completed, under a perpetual and heavy fire of shot and shells from the enemy; not until the 9th, in the evening, were the American batteries in readiness to reply, after which the cannonading upon both sides was incessant. On the 11th the second parallel was commenced, three hundred yards only from the British works. Two advanced redoubts in the way of its prog-
Oct. 14. ress were stormed on the 14th; Hamilton, who had retired from the private service of Washington and was now in command of a New York battalion, conducted the assault upon one of these, and Lafayette that upon the other. Both were successful. Nicholas Fish, major

Hosted by Google

of a regiment under Hamilton, led the advancing party with marvelous celerity. He excelled as a disciplinarian, and every movement was executed with fidelity and precision. Olney, of Providence, guided the first platoon of Gimat's battalion over the abatis. Hamilton placed one foot upon the shoulder of a soldier, who knelt for the purpose, and leaped upon the parapet. John Laurens, leading one of the columns, was among the foremost to enter the redoubt, making prisoner of its commanding officer. The killed and wounded of the British did not exceed eight, as the victors recoiled from imitating the barbarous precedents of the enemy. Not a man was killed or injured after he ceased to resist. Hamilton won conspicuous honor for his talents, gallantry, and humanity. The French carried the other redoubt at the same moment; but, moving by rule and less swiftly, lost more men than did the Americans in their headlong attack.

The next day Cornwallis wrote to Clinton, "My situation now becomes very critical." By the 16th he was in despair, and made a bold and desperate effort to escape with his army, which was frustrated by a storm of wind and rain. At ten o'clock on the morning of the 17th, just four years after the memorable surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga, Cornwallis sent a flag to Washington proposing to capitulate. The terms settled by the commissioners appointed for the purpose were the same as those which had been imposed upon Lincoln at Charleston, and in accordance with arrangements in the allied camp, Lincoln received the submission of the army of Cornwallis precisely in the manner in which his own had been received on the surrender of Charleston. The final ceremonies of the famous event occurred October 19. Oct. 17.

The effect was dazzling. The joyful tidings traveled with the speed of a typhoon. The suddenness of the transaction bewildered human imagination. The public mind hesitated about accepting as truth a story bearing such singular resemblance to fiction. Cornwallis was known as one of the most determined enemies of America, as well as a general of surpassing abilities, and it seemed incredible that he should have been captured, with an entire army numbering over seven thousand trained soldiers. The successive steps, beginning with the military manœuvres about New York City to prevent Clinton from sending aid to Cornwallis, and extending to the complete investment of Yorktown, were taken with such rapidity and sound judgment, and all the combinations were so skillfully arranged, that Washington was enveloped in a blaze of glory.

Intelligence of the capture of Lord Cornwallis thrilled France November 19. It reached London on Sunday, the 25th. Lord Germain was the first to receive and read the dispatch; Lord Walsingham, Nov. 25.

Hosted by Google

Under Secretary of State, being present, the two entered a hackney-coach to save time, and drove to the house of Lord Stormont — the Cabinet Minister who "would hold no intercourse with rebels unless they came to implore his Majesty's mercy"; he joined them in the coach, and the three proceeded rapidly to the residence of Lord North. The prime minister received the news, said Germain, "as he would have taken a ball in the breast." He threw his arms apart. He paced wildly up and down the room in the greatest agitation, exclaiming, "It is all over! It is all over!"

Parliament assembled on Tuesday. The speech of the king was confused, but he still insisted on prosecuting the war. In the debates
Nov. 27. that followed Fox, Burke, Sheridan, the youthful William Pitt, and others assailed the Ministry and the war, as no ministry had ever before or has ever since been assailed. The city of London entreated the king to end hostilities; and public meetings in every part of the kingdom expressed the same wish. Resolutions offered for the discontinuance of the war were lost in the House by a small majority. Lord Germain was compelled, however, to retire from the Cabinet. The rigor with which Laurens was treated in the Tower was condemned in sharp language by the Opposition. Finally, news came that the son of Laurens was the custodian of Cornwallis in America, and that his treatment of the humiliated lord was exactly the reverse of what his father experienced, locked in the very prison of which Cornwallis was governor. From that hour severities were transformed into civilities; and on the last day of December, with health greatly impaired, the ex-President of the American Congress was taken from the Tower in a sedan chair, and was henceforth a free man.

The new year dawned upon a stubborn monarch. George III.
1782. threatened to relinquish his crown rather than change his American policy. His party was falling off, nevertheless. February was a memorable month in Parliament. On the 28th, Conway's motion
Feb. 28 against any further attempt to reduce the colonies was carried, at one o'clock in the morning, by a majority of nineteen. Burke wrote to Franklin that it was the declaration of two hundred and thirty-four members, and the opinion, he believed, of the whole house. "No sooner was the result known," says Wraxall, "than the acclamations pierced the roof, and might have been heard in Westminster Hall."

The popular cry at once turned against Lord North. He was accused of having shown himself void of every principle of honor and honesty. Fox said persons were already in Europe fully empowered to treat for a peace between Great Britain and America, but no progress could be made,

Hosted by Google

because the Minister was "treacherous, vacillating and incapable." North denied the statement that he was averse to peace, and referred to the informal negotiations he had countenanced between Hartley and Franklin. He was met with the scornful response that during the period of those negotiations he had destroyed the confidence of Franklin by tampering with France in an underhanded manner, asking her to enter into a separate treaty with England. On the 8th of March, Lord Cavendish called attention to the mismanagement which had nearly overturned the splendid Empire of Britain, and all the great orators were brought to their feet. On the 18th Sir John Rous followed up the attack of Lord Cavendish by moving to withdraw the confidence of Parliament from ministers. Lord North was individually taunted as the author of the American war, which had cost the nation one hundred millions, with the loss of thirteen ancient colonies. He defended himself and his colleagues with warmth. But the weakness of the government was no longer to be concealed. Lord North had through the whole twelve years of his supremacy been too ready to surrender his judgment to that of the king, who with a narrower understanding had a stronger will. Walpole called him the "ostensible minister"; the real minister was the king. On the 20th the house was crowded to its utmost capacity. March 20. The Earl of Surrey rose to offer a parallel motion to that of Sir John Rous. Lord North rose at the same moment. The two parties present shouted wildly the names of their respective champions. The speaker hesitated; when Lord North, taking the floor on a question of order, said he would save the trouble of submitting and discussing the intended motion by announcing that his administration was at an end.

The effect was indescribable. No painter could have done justice to the varied emotions of astonishment, concern, and exultation expressed upon the countenances of the members. An adjournment for a few days was moved, and carried with little difficulty. Those who had expected a long debate had not ordered their carriages until midnight, and as nearly all of them preferred waiting to walking, they crowded the anteroom to excess. Lord North had directed his coachman to wait, and as he was about to enter his equipage, he turned to a group of members standing in uncomfortable confusion, with a characteristic smile, saying, "Good night, gentlemen; I protest this is the first time in my life I ever derived any personal advantage from being in a secret."

Rockingham, the head of the aristocratic portion of the Opposition, became Prime Minister, accepting the post on condition that there should be "no veto to the independence of America," to which the king submitted in bitterness of spirit; and Shelburne and Fox were made secre-

Digitized by Google

taries of State. Shelburne, as the elder secretary, had charge of the northern department of the British foreign service, which included America, and Fox the southern department, which included France. Thus Shelburne could treat with Franklin and not with Vergennes; and Fox could treat with Vergennes but not with Franklin. Had the two secretaries been on cordial terms with each other, mischief might not have resulted from this awkward condition of affairs. But Fox had a personal antipathy to Shelburne; and Shelburne was in reality the leader of the rival party of the Opposition. Hence the way to peace was clogged with obstacles. When Rockingham died, three months later, Shelburne succeeded him as premier, and Fox, disliking the terms of peace then under consideration, united with Lord North and formed the famous "Coalition."

Hartley, who had with keen political foresight paved the way for overtures, and who "lived but to promote the longed-for peace," wrote to Franklin the day following the resignation of Lord North, asking advice in relation to submitting their late correspondence to the new Ministry when it should be formed; to which Franklin replied on the 31st that his sentiments were the same as hitherto expressed, but being only one of five in a commission empowered to treat with England, of whom Adams was in Holland, Jay in Spain, Laurens in England, and Jefferson in America, he must first consult his associates.[1] The same day he forwarded the Hartley correspondence to Adams. On the 5th of April he wrote to Hartley in considerable anxiety of spirit concerning the character of the men who might be sent by the British government to confer on the subject of peace, remarking that "with contentious wranglers a negotiation may be drawn into length and finally frustrated." To Secretary Livingston he wrote on the 12th in the same strain.[2] Meanwhile he opened a correspondence with Shelburne, who, with the approval of the king, sent Richard Oswald at once to confer with Franklin. In conversation with the philosopher, Oswald said that England was prepared to concede the independence of the United States; but if France should demand concessions too humiliating England would still fight. On the

April 18. 18th Franklin and Oswald visited Vergennes, and were closeted in his cabinet nearly an hour. Shelburne's agent, a business man of moderate ability, who could not speak a word of French, was received

[1] *Hartley to Franklin*, March 21, 1782; *Franklin to Hartley*, March 31, 1782; *Franklin to Adams*, March 31, 1782; Congress, under date of June 15, 1781, vested full power, special and general, in Franklin, Adams, Jay, Laurens, and Jefferson, to confer, treat, and conclude all matters relating to the establishment of peace with England, and the other European powers.

[2] *Franklin to Hartley*, April 5, 1782; *Franklin to Livingston*, April 12, 1782.

Hosted by Google

cordially by the French Minister, and was assured that the French Court warmly reciprocated England's disposition to end the American war; and yet France, positively, could treat only for a general peace. Vergennes advised the selection of Paris as the seat of the negotiation, but offered to consent to any other place which George III. might prefer. Oswald desired some proposition to convey to Shelburne. "No," said Vergennes; "there are four nations engaged in the war against you, who cannot, till they have consulted and know each other's minds, be ready to make propositions. Your court, being without allies and alone, knowing its own mind, can express it immediately. It is more natural to expect the first proposition from you."

Oswald returned to London under the general impression that France was about to impose conditions which England would resent. In sixteen days he was in Paris again. During his absence Franklin wrote to Jay in Madrid, entreating him to come to Paris and aid in forming a treaty, remarking, "Spain has taken four years to consider whether she should treat with us or not. Give her forty, and in the mean time let us mind our own business." But Oswald brought no propositions. His mission was to Franklin, not to Vergennes. He said the other Secretary of State was about to send an agent to negotiate with the French Minister. The British Cabinet was already in a foment. Fox, resolved upon a quarrel with Shelburne, had declared that the hostile powers must yield entirely. "If they do not we must go to war again; that is all; I am sure I am ready;" he said. And he chose one of his own partisans, Thomas Grenville, son of George Grenville, a very young man, with no experience in public business, and totally ignorant of the nature of the relations between America and France, to discuss these subjects — of such interest to mankind — with the most skillful diplomatist of Europe. Four days later than Oswald, Grenville arrived in Paris, bearing a cordial letter from Fox to Franklin, who entertained him at breakfast, and then took him in his own carriage to Versailles, presenting him to Vergennes.

May 4.

May 8.

European statesmen smiled when they heard that the envoy of the "rebels" had been requested by the British Secretary of State, to introduce the son of the author of the American Stamp Act, as British Plenipotentiary to the Court of France.

The agents from both Shelburne and Fox proved to be mere skirmishing parties. Grenville offered to grant the Independence of the United States to France, if she would restore certain specified conquests. Vergennes shook his head, and said that France found, but did not make America independent; he defied the world to furnish the smallest proof

Hosted by Google

to the contrary. "There sits Mr. Franklin, who knows the fact and can contradict me if I do not speak the truth," he exclaimed, with warmth.

Grenville wrote long letters to Fox, calling him "Dear Charles," and declaring that he had not the "slightest expectation of peace." Franklin was affable and courteous; he breakfasted both Oswald and Grenville, in company with Lafayette, who had just returned from America. A day or two after, Oswald suddenly departed for England. The same morning a letter from Hartley informed Franklin that an absolute order had gone forth for the release of all American prisoners everywhere, and that Laurens was entirely at liberty; in a long conversation relating to America, Shelburne had expressed himself to Hartley in the most favorable terms. On the 26th Grenville announced to Franklin that a commission had been forwarded to him from Fox; but it was to treat with France, no mention being made of America, and Vergennes pronounced it insufficient. Suspicion seized upon the French Court. Franklin grew reticent, and would not unfold American conditions to a person unauthorized to receive them. Grenville, mortified and irritated, blamed Oswald, and wrote to Fox that he could not fight a daily battle with "a rival agent and his Secretary of State," and advised Fox to assume the exclusive control of the negotiation. This letter broke up the British Cabinet, although the two factions held together until the end of June.

May 26.

After a tedious journey John Jay arrived in Paris, Sunday, June 23, accompanied by his family. Another month elapsed before Great Britain took a decided step for commencing negotiations. On the 25th of July the king issued an order to the attorney-general to prepare a commission for Oswald to conclude a general treaty with the belligerent nations. Franklin wrote to Secretary Livingston and to Robert Morris on the same day, cautioning them "not to be deceived by fair words," but, on the contrary, to be constantly on guard, and prepared for war. Jay had been an enthusiast for foreign alliance in the beginning of the struggle; four years in Spain had dispelled his illusions, and now he distrusted all nations, France included. He was severely ill for a few weeks, during which time the British Cabinet was recast, Grenville recalled, and Fitzherbert sent to the French Court in his stead. About the middle of August, Oswald's commission arrived, to which Jay took exception because the United States were called "Colonies or Plantations." Franklin thought it would do; and Vergennes intimated that names signified little. But Jay absolutely refused to sacrifice the moral dignity of his country, and stopped all proceedings until the power he represented should be styled by its proper name. He even drafted

June 23.

July 25.

Hosted by Google

the form of a commission, which, sent to the British Court, was subsequently adopted, and the new document reached Oswald September 27. In the interim Franklin was ill, and Jay conducted, alone, the various discussions as to the details of the prospective treaty. Spain was an obstacle, and Vergennes wished to conciliate that power. Jay declined to treat with Count Arnada, whom he pronounced the ablest Spaniard he had ever known, until, according to established etiquette, he should communicate his powers from his government. "An exchange of commissions cannot be expected," said Arnada, "for Spain has not acknowledged your independence." "We have declared our independence," replied Jay, "and France, Britian, and Holland have acknowledged it." Lafayette, who was in company with Arnada at the moment, said the dignity of France would be compromised should her ally treat otherwise than as independent. Vergennes urged Jay to waive his inflexible adherence to forms, and proceed to the settlement of claims with Spain. Jay said, "We shall be content with no boundaries short of the Mississippi." Sept. 27.

October was devoted to the subject in earnest. At the request of Franklin, Jay drew up the articles of peace. Little progress, however, was made towards agreement on the three troublesome points — the boundaries, the fisheries, and the Tories. On the 26th Adams arrived from his successful Holland mission, and warmly commended the wisdom and firmness of Jay. The month of November was nearly spent before the business drew to a close. On the 28th Laurens arrived and joined the conference, having been formally exchanged for Lord Cornwallis. Friday, the 29th, was an exciting day for the commissioners. They met in the rooms of Jay at the Hôtel d'Orleans. Oswald and Fitzherbert were present, also Sir Henry Strachey, Baronet, then Under Secretary of State to Townshend, who had been sent to the assistance of Oswald. It was important to come to an understanding, for the Ministry was in a tottering condition. Something must be done, or the peace abandoned indefinitely. Hence the preliminary articles were re-read, corrected, and approved. The next day they were signed. Oct. 26. Nov. 30.

Prefacing these preliminary articles were the words, "The treaty is not to be concluded until terms of peace shall be agreed upon between Great Britain and France." But the document not having been submitted to Vergennes until after it was signed, he was ill at ease. The sagacity and self-poise of Jay and Adams in demanding concessions of Great Britain, contrary to his advice and policy, inspired him with respect, while he pronounced their conduct "irregular," and in the irritation of the moment reproached Franklin with being too pliant in the hands of his colleagues. The aged philosopher hastened to mollify the Minister, and no serious harm

Hosted by Google

ensued. The commissioners, who had been instructed to do nothing without the knowledge and consent of France, were severely censured by Congress. Jay said, in regard to his determination to be independent in action, that Vergennes did not consult the American commissioners about his articles, and "giving him as little trouble about ours did not violate any principle of reciprocity." And not only Adams but Franklin and Laurens sustained Jay in the sentiment expressed to Secretary Livingston: "Since we have assumed a place in the political system of the world, let us move like a primary and not like a secondary planet."

Vergennes and Fitzherbert concluded terms January 18. Two days later Franklin and Adams, in the absence of Jay and Laurens, were suddenly summoned to Versailles for the signing of the general treaty. The Ministers of the three crowns of France, England, and Spain showed their commissions, as did also Franklin and Adams. Arnada and Fitzherbert signed the preliminary treaty between Great Britain and Spain; Vergennes and Fitzherbert that between Great Britian and France; and Fitzherbert, Franklin, and Adams the armistice between Great Britain and the United States.

1783. Jan. 20.

A definitive treaty between Great Britain and America was now in order. None of the articles of the provisional treaty could be carried into effect until it was accomplished. Congress would not even take the preliminaries into consideration. The distractions in the British Court prevented immediate steps to this end. Shelburne's policy had created the greatest dissatisfaction; he was accused of stock-jobbing, criticised with virulence by the "Coalition," censured by the House of Commons, and finally retired from office. Oswald was pronounced incompetent to treat with the American commissioners, and recalled. All parties in England were disposed to prevent further waste of blood and treasure in pursuit of an object manifestly unattainable. But the methods of peace kept the lords of the realm in a perpetual wrangle. Public feeling, as well as the interests of the nation, called for a settlement of the perplexing business, and no progress could be made with the European powers until America was pacified. Thus something must be done.

David Hartley was finally selected to conclude negotiations on the part of Great Britain. His pure and lofty character, his broad views, his intuitive and tranquil discernment of things as they were, and his peculiar tact in diplomacy, rendered his appointment generally acceptable. Fox wrote to Franklin (April 19) that Hartley had "the full and entire confidence of his Majesty's Ministers upon the subject of his mission."

His commission, under the king's own hand, Adams said, was "very magnificent." It bore the great seal in a silver box, the King's arms

Hosted by Google

engraven on it, and ornamented with two large golden tassels. He presented it to the American Commission, assembled in Mr. Adams's rooms May 19. For the next three months the representatives of the two countries worked diligently. New articles were proposed, discussed, and rejected; or, if agreed upon in Paris, rejected in London. The questions at issue affected the interests of the whole civilized world. The propositions offered by America to the British government amounted to an entire abolition of the British "Act of Navigation" with respect to the thirteen United States. The ancient system of national commercial policy was called upon to take a new principle into its foundation — thereby its commercial engagements with other ancient powers were materially disturbed. Vergennes recommended that the definitive treaty be completed, leaving commerce to a future negotiation; but Adams curtly replied that "nothing would be gained by delay." The new empire, comprehending territory greater than that of all Europe, must needs adjust a commercial system of its own, and the sooner the better. May 19.

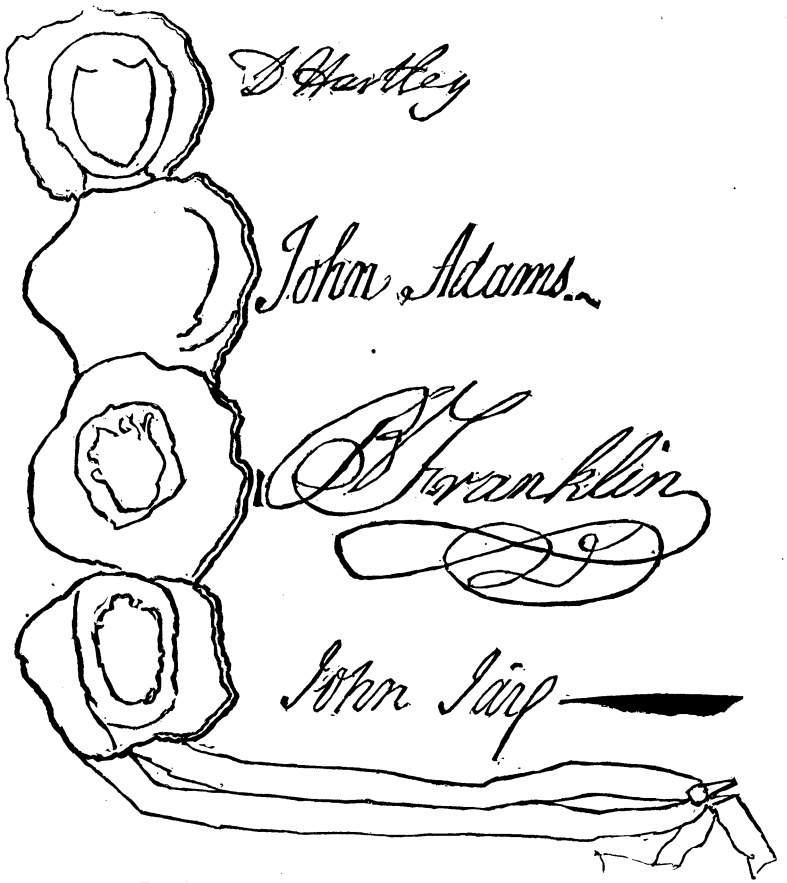
Paris, at this epoch, was in the zenith of its pride and splendor. Never during its checkered history was such a concourse of celebrities gathered there — not only the ministers from all nations, to discuss the weightiest of subjects, but sages and philanthropists, courtiers and scholars. Franklin, who had snatched the lightning from heaven and the scepter from tyrants, was the center of attraction. Mr. and Mrs. Jay resided with him in a comfortable mansion at Passy; and the New York beauty charmed with her fund of knowledge, wit, and vivacity, and her engaging manners, the brilliant circle which daily surrounded his table or enlivened his evenings. Mrs. Jay was also a great favorite among the courtly aristocracy. Dinners followed dinners in endless succession. The ministers of every country entertained the ministers of every other country. There was apparent harmony of feeling; while the great topics of the hour were uppermost in the social mind.

Spain, France, and England were embarrassed in their negotiations by a variety of clashing demands. Holland, leaning towards France, resisted England's stern conditions. Sweden, Russia, and Denmark came to witness the triumph of the young power which had dared to refuse to take the first step, except on equal footing with the proudest of them all, and were engaged in adjusting treaties of amity and commerce. In the mean time the Americans held the position of advantage, the final action of all the courts and nations depending upon the issue of their negotiations with Great Britain.

When the month of August was nearly half spent Hartley invited Adams one fine sunshiny morning to drive with him to Passy, where, in

Hosted by Google

conference with Franklin and Jay, he communicated instructions just received from his court. The king had ratified the provisional
Aug. 13. treaty under the great seal of the kingdom. Both the Duke of Portland and Fox had given him the strongest assurances of the good disposition of government, and written him to arrange all things immediately upon the best footing. The contested points, particularly the fisheries and the boundaries, of immense importance to the United States, had come to be regarded by the Ministry as of minor significance in comparison with the hazard of longer delaying the settlement of the

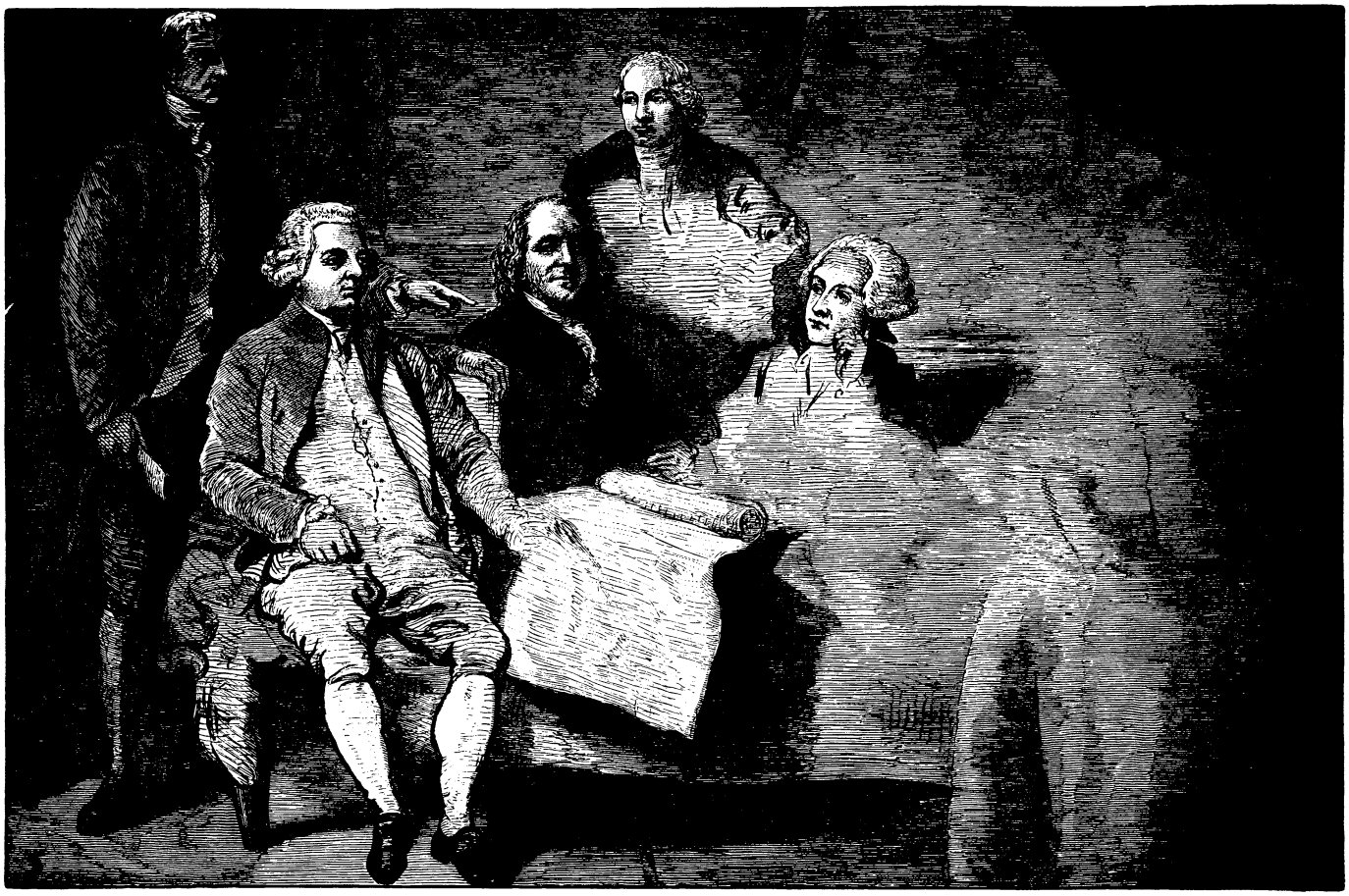


Fac-Simile of the Signatures upon the Definitive Treaty of Peace.
[From the original in the State Department, Washington.]

European question. Hartley produced the draft of a definitive treaty he had received, which proved to be the preliminary articles with a preamble. He said he was now ready to sign at any moment. On the 29th,

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google



"Benjamin West, successor of Sir Joshua Reynolds as President of the British Academy, made an unfinished study in oil of the act which restored peace to the world." Page 267.

Hosted by Google

when France and Spain declared their preparations complete, Hartley wrote, asking the representatives of the United States to fix the eventful day. He closed his note, saying: "My instructions confine me to Paris, as the place appointed for the exercise of my functions, and therefore whatever day you may fix upon for the signature, I shall hope to receive the honor of your company at the Hôtel de York. I am, gentlemen, with the greatest respect and consideration, your most obedient servant."

The following answer was returned, dated Passy, August 30, 1783: "The American Ministers, plenipotentiaries for making peace with Great Britain, present their compliments to Mr. Hartley. They regret that Mr. Hartley's instructions will not permit him to sign the Definitive Treaty of Peace with America at the place appointed for the signature of the others. They will, nevertheless, have the honor of waiting upon Mr. Hartley at his lodgings at Paris, for the purpose of signing the treaty in question, on Wednesday morning at eight o'clock."

Accordingly on the 3d of September the American diplomatists, whose superiors as such were not to be found in any nation of Europe at that day, proceeded to the apartments of Hartley, and the Definitive Treaty of Peace between Great Britain and the United States was signed. The sketch is a fac-simile of the signatures, from the original document in the State Department at Washington, with indications of the seals, now nearly obliterated, and of the ribbon, which is of pale blue. The treaty was in due course of time ratified by the King and Congress. Vergennes delayed the ceremony of signing the treaties at Versailles between Great Britain and France and Spain until a messenger from Paris arrived to announce that the signing of the American treaty had actually taken place; after which, before the end of the same day, all the belligerent powers of Europe concluded peace, except the Dutch, who had assented to preliminaries only the day before. Sept. 3.

Benjamin West, successor of Sir Joshua Reynolds as President of the British Academy, made an unfinished study in oil of the act which restored peace to the world. An engraved copy of this painting was presented by George Grote, the historian of Greece, to John Jay, grandson of the Revolutionary diplomatist, while United States Minister to Vienna.[1] The benign countenance of Franklin, then in his seventy-seventh year, with his grandson, Temple Franklin, secretary of the Commission, standing behind him; the well-poised head and handsome features of Adams, scarcely forty-eight; the pale, feeble-looking Laurens, not yet recovered

[1] To the courtesy of Hon. John Jay the author is indebted for a copy of the unfinished study by West, which, published for the first time, in our full-page engraving, illustrates one of the most interesting scenes in modern history.

Hosted by Google

from the hardships of his imprisonment in the Tower of London, a scholarly man of fifty-nine; and the tall, slight figure of Jay — who was ten years younger than Adams, and forty years younger than Franklin — standing, apparently addressing the Commission, with face and attitude expressive of the calm serenity, self-respect, and refined power of the highest type of human intellect and character, together form a picture which Americans will ever cherish with national pride.

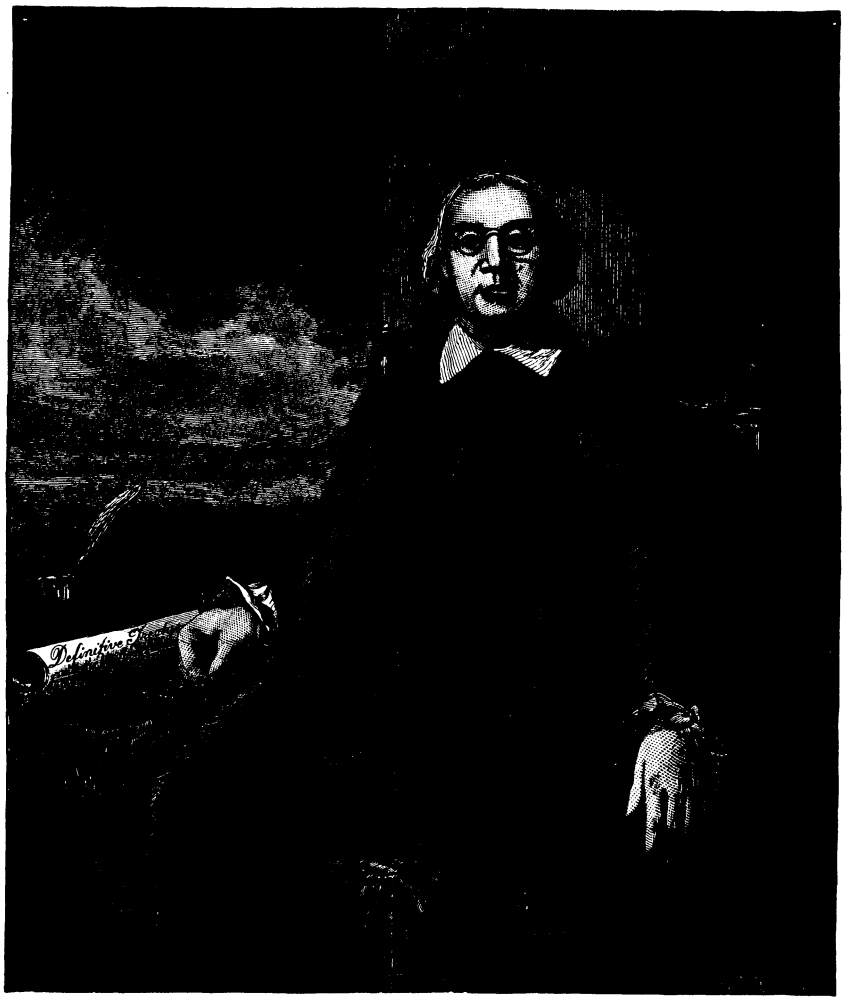
It is refreshing to note the gracious spirit with which the senior members of the Commission accorded the glory of obtaining the fisheries, the Mississippi, and the magnificent boundaries of the United States, to the youngest of their number. The British plenipotentiaries bore testimony to the same effect. Documents at present existing in both France and England prove that the French government, neither anxious nor willing America should lay the basis for such magnitude and grandeur, worked industriously to prevent England from yielding the fisheries, and labored vigorously to have the Mississippi given to Spain. The community of fault-finders in the end acknowledged the sound judgment of the American envoy who dared to veer from his instructions and take lofty ground with kingdoms and crowns, upon individual responsibility — through a sense of duty to the rising nation. And a just and prosperous people, in full enjoyment of the magic blessings made doubly sure through the clear order of his thought and the keen foresight of his statemanship, blessings which shine with advancing splendor as the years roll on, will never cease to honor with gratitude the achievement of John Jay of New York.[1]

Only the American commissioners appear in the painting, the portrait of the English Minister not having been accessible to West. Some two years later, David Hartley presented Franklin with a large mezzotint portrait of himself, engraved by Walker from a painting by Romney, which Franklin in his note of acknowledgment, dated Philadelphia, October 27, 1785, said, "I shall frame and keep in my best room." It represents Hartley seated by a table upon which lies the Definitive Treaty of Peace with the United States, his right hand resting near the scroll, and the pen and ink in the background with which he is about to

[1] "It was not only chiefly, but solely, through his means that the negotiations of that period, between England and France, were brought to a successful conclusion," wrote Fitzherbert (Lord St. Helens) some years afterward. John Adams always affirmed that the title of "the Washington of the negotiation," bestowed upon himself in Holland, properly belonged to Jay; and he wrote, while President of the United States, under date of November 24, 1800, "The principal merit of the successful negotiations for the peace of 1783 was Mr. Jay's." Governor William Livingston wrote to Jay, "The treaty is universally applauded." Alexander Hamilton wrote to Jay, "The people of New England talk of making you an annual fish offering."

Hosted by Google

consummate the final act necessary for the restoration of tranquillity to five great nations. He is waiting in his Paris apartments for the arrival of the American Ministers, on the morning designated for the signing of



David Hartley.
[From a painting by Romney]

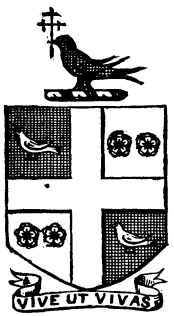
the document; and his emotional features beam with delighted satisfaction as he anticipates the final triumph his own noble and persistent efforts have contributed so largely to accomplish. The picture hung in the study of Franklin until his death. It is now in possession of his great-grandson, Dr. T. H. Bache, through whose courtesy the copy has been

Hosted by Google

made which we present for the first time to the reading public. It possesses a dramatic interest beyond the mere portraiture of the man. It is an impressive illustration, in which we behold the ceremony of older institutions, represented by kings and nobles, bowing unconsciously before the divinity of a new liberty and a new world.[1]

Vergennes entertained the diplomatists from the various countries at

[1] David Hartley, Member of Parliament for Kingston-upon-Hull, and "His Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary appointed to treat with the United States of America" (born 1729, died 1813), was the son of Dr. David Hartley, author and metaphysician (born 1705, died 1752), whose publication of "Observations on Man" in 1749 gave him world-wide celebrity, and of whom it was said that "he was addicted to no vice in any part of his life, neither to pride, nor ostentation, nor any sordid self-interest, but his heart was replete with every contrary virtue"; his great talents were specially directed to the moral and religious sciences; he was the son of the Vicar of Armley, County of York, an eminent divine, whose family, one of great antiquity, was descended from the Hartleys of Chorton, of whom was Sir John Hartley, knighted in the eighth year of Charles I., October 23, 1633. The motto of the family, "vive ut vivas," seems to have breathed through the character of a long line of generations of learned and philanthropic men. David Hartley, the statesman, like his father, was a student of science, and belonged to the highest type of the cultured Christian gentleman. His manly integrity, universal benevolence, and sincerity of heart were so well known in England, that in all his mediations for the good of America he commanded the respect and confidence of the contending parties at home. His "Letters on the American War," addressed to the mayor and corporation of Kingston-upon-Hull, comprehend some of the ablest arguments of the period. He was also one of the first in the House of Commons to introduce and advocate measures for the abolition of the slave-trade.



Hartley Arms.

Of the sons of the Vicar of Armley, James, next to David, was distinguished for eminent piety and intellectual vigor. Robert, eldest son of James, born 1736, married Martha Smithson, granddaughter of Sir Hugh Smithson, Baronet, and the cousin of Lord Percy, second Duke of Northumberland. See page 242 (Vol. II.), *note.* Isaac Hartley, the son of Robert Hartley and Martha Smithson, born at Cockermouth in 1766, married Isabella Johnson in 1787, and in 1797 established his residence in New York. They were the parents of Robert Milham Hartley, born at Cockermouth in 1796, who has been so thoroughly identified during a long and useful life with church and charity in New York City. He was classically educated, but resigned studies for the ministry because of impaired health. Devoting himself to philanthropic works, he has been largely instrumental in founding several of New York's most important charitable institutions, now in noiseless and successful operation, among which was the first organization for the relief of the poor. His published reports, numbering thirty-four volumes, form a complete library in this department of social and economic science, and are quoted by writers on similar themes in Europe as well as America. He has also written other works upon kindred topics, been a regular contributor to the religious press, and for nearly half a century a leading elder in the Presbyterian Church of New York City. He married Catharine Munson, daughter of Reuben Munson, member of the New York legislature and alderman of the city for many years; and he has nine children, four sons and five daughters, who have intermarried with the old families, and are among the substantial citizens of New York; his third son is the Rev. Dr. Isaac Smithson Hartley, of the Dutch Reformed Church, Utica.

Hosted by Google

a memorable dinner at Versailles immediately after the signing of the treaties.

While these events were transpiring in Europe the war was at a standstill in America. Washington's army returned from the capture of Cornwallis to the vicinity of New York City. Predatory excursions were frequent during the winter. But with the change in the British Ministry Sir Henry Clinton was superseded by the humane Sir Guy Carleton. "I should be very sorry," wrote Governor Livingston, when he heard how bitterly the loyalists were blaming Clinton for the misfortunes of Cornwallis, "to have Clinton recalled through any national resentment; because, as fertile as England is in the production of blockheads, I think they cannot easily send us a greater blunderbuss, unless, peradventure, it should please his Majesty himself to do us the honor of a visit." Carleton arrived early in May, 1782; and his first act was to liberate from a New York prison, without exacting a parole from either, Sir James, brother of John Jay, who had been instrumental in the passage of the New York Act of Attainder, and Brockholst Livingston, the brother of Mrs. John Jay. Carleton sent the latter home to his father with a courteous letter, stating that he (Carleton) had come to conciliate, not to fight. The governor was not to be thus lulled into security while a hostile army occupied the chief city of the country, and significantly remarked, "In worldly politics, as well as religion, we should watch as well as pray."

Washington accepted Carleton's expressions of good-will with caution. But as the weary summer rolled by and neither Sir Guy nor Admiral Digby seemed inclined to act offensively by land or by sea, he began to feel assured that no further military operations would be undertaken. Peace was expected. It came so slowly, however, that the patience of the American army waned. Both officers and men fretted in idleness. There was scarce money enough to feed them day by day; their pay was greatly in arrears; and a general mistrust prevailed that Congress would fail to liquidate their claims in the end, and cast them adrift penniless.

New York City breathed more freely under the new military administration. Carleton found the inhabitants grievously oppressed. Unprincipled officials had dispossessed persons of their property who had taken no part in the Revolution, because perchance some member of the family resided out of the British lines. Houses were rented and the rents paid into the city funds. Justice could not be obtained, not even a trial or a hearing; for civil law had been abolished, and all power and authority centered in a police court established by the military. The city charter was declared forfeited by the civil governor and his satellites; and the revenues of the corporation were appropriated to their private

Hosted by Google

uses. Carleton was amazed at the infamous character of the frauds and the cruelties from which the New-Yorkers had suffered, and instituted a vigorous war upon official corruption. Jones says "he broke, discharged, dismissed, and cashiered such a number of supernumeraries, pensioners, and placemen as saved the British nation, in the course of one year only, about two millions sterling."

The French troops embarked for the West Indies in October. The American army went into cheerless winter-quarters on the Hudson. The impoverished condition of the country was perpetually discussed by the intelligent classes; commerce was nearly annihilated, and the heavy burden of debt rested like an incubus on the people. Many doubted the possibility of maintaining a republican form of government. Finally the idea, long discussed in secret, found expression in a letter from Colonel Lewis Nicola, on behalf of himself and others, proposing to Washington to be made King of the United States for the "national advantage!" Washington declined with indignant asperity, and reprimanded Nicola for having entertained such a thought. But it was no easy matter to control the restless and unpaid soldiers through the idle months, and Washington's greatness in the emergency became more than ever conspicuous. A mutinous spirit, provoked by repeated and irritating delays in obtaining compensation for services, and fresh difficulties arising from the uncertainty attending peace negotiations, kept him industrious and anxious. The spring of 1783 brought news of the signing of the armistice at Paris in January, and a cessation of hostilities was publicly announced to the army at noon, April 19, just eight years to a day since the conflict at Lexington. It was naturally next to impossible for the excited troops to distinguish between this proclamation and a definitive declaration of peace; hence many considered any further claim on their military services unjust. Washington met the crisis nobly. Explaining the situation to Congress, he obtained discretionary powers to grant furloughs, the soldiers being led to understand perfectly that their terms of service would not expire until the signing of the Definitive Treaty. During the summer following, men singly and men in groups were returning to their homes; thus the danger of disbanding large masses at a time, of unpaid soldiery, was effectually obviated. On the 6th of May Washington and Sir Guy Carleton met at Orangetown to arrange preliminaries for the evacuation of New York City, whenever the royal order should arrive. In the month of June, Egbert Benson was commissioned by Congress to cooperate with commissioners chosen by Carleton to inspect and superintend the embarkation of loyalists and their effects for Nova Scotia; his associates were William Stephens Smith and Daniel Parker.

Hosted by Google

The month of May was distinguished by the organization of the celebrated Society of the Cincinnati, which originated in the fertile mind of Knox, its object being to cement and perpetuate the friendship of the officers of the army who had fought and bled together, and to transmit the same sentiment to their descendants. The plan was drafted by a committee composed of Knox, Hand, Huntington, and Shaw. The final meeting for its adoption was held May 13, in the Verplanck Mansion at Fishkill on the Hudson, the headquarters of Baron Steuben, who, as senior officer, presided. Washington was chosen the first president, and officiated until his death.

Sadness and despair overwhelmed the loyalists. New York City presented a scene of distress not easily described. Men who had joined the British army, and exhibited the utmost valor in battle, quailed before the inexorable necessity of exile from their native land. They must leave the country or be hanged. Such was the general belief, for those who had shown no mercy counted upon none in return. The conscientious and the unprincipled were alike involved in pecuniary ruin. Seeing that they must abandon large estates, many appealed to Carleton for power to collect debts due upon bonds, mortgages, and contracts, before the evacuation of the city should take place, for they were penniless. The complications were insurmountable, and nothing was accomplished in that direction. Angry lamentations filled the very air. The victims of civil war inveighed against England for abandoning them, and against their own kindred and country for the inexorable harshness of their doom. They did not pause in their wretchedness to consider what would have been the fate of those who had expended or lost fortunes in the cause of liberty, if triumph had been with themselves.

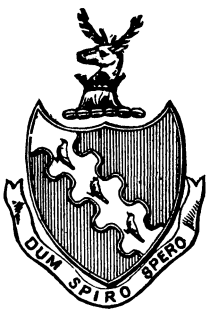
While Carleton was providing transports and embarking twelve or more thousand deeply humbled loyalists, with their household and other effects, to Nova Scotia, the Bahamas, and Great Britain, and multitudes were hastening from the country to New York for passage, determined to risk starvation on foreign shores rather than encounter the terrible vengeance of those whom they had injured, Washington and Governor George Clinton were riding on horseback through the picturesque valleys of the Northern Hudson and the Mohawk, inspecting the posts and the battle-fields, and taking note of the wonderful topography of New York. Theirs was the faint glimmer, not the full dawn, of the future. One angle of the State rests upon the Atlantic, another reaches to the St. Lawrence, and the third stretches to the chain of Great Lakes connected with the Mississippi; thus without overcoming one mountain ridge the city of New York might communicate with the Western States and Territories of our

Hosted by Google

Union, simply following the easy and natural course of valleys, rivers, and lakes, and control the commerce of the continent. The Missouri can now be navigated into the very gorges of the Rocky Mountains. From New York Bay to the Pacific Ocean, except a short space between the head-waters of the Missouri and the Columbia Rivers, we have an unbroken silver chain of water. The State in which every county and almost every spot of earth bore marks of bloody strife — the great battle-field of the Revolution — was in the broadest sense indeed the key of the Continent.

Intelligence of the signing of the Definitive Treaty came at length; and Sir Guy Carleton gave notice that he should be ready for the final evacuation of New York on the 25th of November. George Clinton, by virtue of his office as governor of New York, was to take charge of the city, and repaired to Harlem to await events, accompanied by Washington. The British troops had been drawn in from Kingsbridge, McGowan's Pass, the various posts on Long Island, and Paulus Hook. By request of Carleton, to prevent any disorder which might occur as the British retired, a detachment of American troops under Knox marched from Harlem, on the morning appointed, down the Bowery Road to a point near the Fresh-Water Pond, where they remained seated on the grass until about one o'clock in the afternoon. As the rear-guard of the British army began to embark, they moved silently forward to the Battery, and took possession of the fort. Knox then galloped back with a chosen few to meet and escort Washington and Clinton into the capital. The formal entry was witnessed by thousands. Washington and Clinton on horseback, with their suites, led the procession, followed by the lieutenant-governor, the legislature, officers of the army, prominent citizens, and the military, amid the most heart-stirring and grateful enthusiasm. This scene forms a grand epoch in the annals of New York.

Nov. 25.



Reade Arms.
[See page 209, *note*.]

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1783-1787.

NEW YORK CITY AFTER PEACE WAS ESTABLISHED.

THE RETURN OF NEW YORK FAMILIES. — DESOLATION. — REV. DR. JOHN RODGERS. — CHURCHES. — RUTGERS COLLEGE. — REV. DR. HARDENBERGH. — WASHINGTON PARTING WITH HIS OFFICERS. — WASHINGTON'S RESIGNATION OF AUTHORITY. — JAMES DUANE APPOINTED MAYOR OF THE CITY. — THE MAYOR'S COURT. — RICHARD VARICK. — THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE. — OLD MORRISANIA. — THE MORRIS FAMILY. — THE LOYALISTS. — CONFISCATION ACTS. — THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REORGANIZED. — SCHOOLS. — FIRST REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK. — COLUMBIA COLLEGE. — NEWSPAPERS. — FIRST CITY DIRECTORY. — POLITICAL THROES. — WEAKNESS OF THE GOVERNMENT. — CITIZENS. — BANKING INTERESTS. — COUNTERFEIT MONEY. — THE DE LANCEYS. — THE LIVINGSTONS. — THE LAWYERS OF THE CITY.

HOME again. From all quarters came together the limbs and fragments of dismembered families. It was a costly victory that had been won, and many a tear fell amid the general rejoicings. There was scarcely a domestic circle into which death had not entered; and charred and silent ruins greeted multitudes in place of homes left seven years before. Dwellings that had escaped the flames were bruised and dismantled; and gardens and grounds were covered with a rank growth of weeds and wild grass, fences had disappeared, and the débris of army life was strewed from one end of the town to the other. Public buildings were battered and worn with usages foreign to the purposes of their erection, and the trade of New York was ruined, and her treasury empty.

The Rev. Dr. John Rodgers arrived in the city the day following the evacuation, and found both the Brick Church in Beekman Street and the Wall Street Presbyterian Church in unfit condition for public worship — having been used as hospitals by the British. But the Episcopalians courteously offered him the use of St. Paul's Chapel and St. George's Chapel, in which he preached alternately to his congregation for several months.[1] He was a courtly personage, of gentle and conciliatory manners,

[1] The change in public feeling is strikingly illustrated by this incident. See Vol. I. 751. The Brick Church on Beekman Street was the first repaired. The Wall Street Church was

Hosted by Google

but "uncompromising in matter." Jones says that he "had given more encouragement to rebellion, by his treasonable harangues from the pulpit, than any other republican preacher, perhaps, upon the continent." His influence was now exerted to perpetuate the peace secured. "I have the good old gentleman at this moment distinctly before me," writes Duer, "in his buzz-wig, three-cornered hat, gold-headed cane, and silver buckles in his well-polished shoes — as he passed along the street in his gown and bands, which he wore not only on Sundays, but on week-days when visiting among his people — bowing right and left to all who saluted him." The Dutch Reformed Church in Garden Street was found intact, and reopened on the Sabbath following the evacuation. Rev. Dr. John Henry Livingston occupied the pulpit.[1] It was seven years before the Middle Dutch and the North Dutch Church edifices were restored from the ruinous condition in which they were left by the British. A School of Theology, established in New Brunswick, New Jersey, in 1770, was chartered under the name of Queen's College — now Rutgers — and the trustees elected Rev. Dr. Jacobus Rutsen Hardenbergh President; but it had not been in practical operation through the confusion of events. Meanwhile Dr. Hardenbergh had preached at Raritan, taken no pains to conceal his republican sentiments, as a member of the New Jersey Convention which framed the Constitution of the State was frequently in counsel with Governor Livingston, and was visited at his little parsonage daily by Washington when quartered in the vicinity. He came to New York to witness the triumphal entry of Washington; and before he returned to his charge arranged with Dr. Livingston to use every exertion in obtaining an endowment to carry the plan of the college into execution. This was achieved within the next three years, and Dr. Hardenbergh removed to New Brunswick, where he labored indefatigably for its advancement until his death in 1790.[2]

not opened until June 19, 1784. The expense of restoring the two edifices to their former condition was met by private subscription. On the 6th of April, 1784, the Presbyterian Church became a body corporate, and was thus relieved from the difficulty it had so long sustained for want of a charter. *Memoirs of Rev. Dr. John Rodgers*, by Rev. Dr. Samuel Miller.

[1] See Vol. I. 750; Rev Dr. Laidlie died at Red Hook in 1778.

[2] Rev. Jacobus Rutsen Hardenbergh, D. D., born at Rosendale, Ulster County, New York, in 1738, was the son of Johannes Hardenbergh, the chief owner of the manorial patent which embraced the most of Sullivan and Orange Counties, and who is said to have been a near relative of the German statesman, Karl August Von Hardenberg, Prime Minister of Frederic William III. He studied theology with Rev. John Frelinghuysen — the son of Rev. T. J. Frelinghuysen, and one of five brothers who were all ministers — in Raritan, New Jersey; and completed his studies at Schenectady under the celebrated Dr. Romeyn. After the early and lamented death of Rev. John Frelinghuysen, Dr. Hardenbergh married his

Hosted by Google

Washington was quartered at Fraunces' Tavern, corner of Broad and Pearl Streets,[1] where the officers of the army gathered about him preparatory to their final separation. Knox, who had been chief of artillery through the entire war, commanded the military forces in the city until the civil authority should be reconstructed. He was a man of large, athletic frame, head well poised, and voice of singular power. When the American army crossed the Delaware, it is said his orders could be heard from one side of the river to the other. There was a dash of romance in his life, and an air of consequence in his bearing, that rendered him interesting to the community at large. He was of Scotch-Irish stock, born in Boston. Even in boyhood he evinced strong military proclivities, collected and distributed military books, and accumulated a valuable fund of military knowledge. As a stripling, engaged in the book business, he became prosperous; his store was the resort of the young ladies of Boston — who were then as now fond of reading — with one of whom he fell in love. The attachment was mutual; but the lady was the daughter of a high official under the king, who would not sanction her marriage with a rebel, and the pair consequently eloped. In June, 1775, just after the British commander had issued an order that no one should take arms out of the city, Henry Knox and his devoted wife walked out of the city together, Mrs. Knox carrying her husband's sword concealed in her garments; having secured her safety in the country, Knox hastened to assist in the Battle of Bunker Hill as a volunteer aide-de-camp to General Ward. During the eight years of the war he had displayed some great moral and intellectual qualities. He was now thirty-three. Within two years we shall find him Secretary of War, and also performing the duties of Secretary of the Navy for the new nation; while Mrs. Knox, who had braved so many dangers for love, became the centre of attraction in the highest social circle at the seat of government.

widow, one of the most accomplished and remarkable women of her day, whose only son, Frederick Frelinghuysen, became a member of the Continental Congress in 1777, and resigned to join the army. He was United States Senator from 1793 to 1796. His son, Theodore Frelinghuysen, completed a classical education at New Brunswick in 1804, studied law, was appointed Attorney-General of the State in 1817, was United States Senator from 1829 to 1835, Mayor of Newark, New Jersey, in 1837, and became Chancellor of the University of the City of New York in 1838, which he resigned in 1850 to accept the Presidency of Rutgers College. Dr. Hardenbergh visited Holland in 1762, and was the first minister ordained in America who ever preached in the churches of the Fatherland. He died in 1790, universally lamented. His son, Jacobus R. Hardenbergh, a lawyer and a man of fortune, settled in New Brunswick, and was the ancestor of the present family of the name in New Brunswick, Jersey City, and New York.

[1] See sketches, Vol. I. 656, 759.

Hosted by Google

The formal parting of Washington with his officers occurred at noon on the 4th of December, in the great historic room of Fraunces'
Dec. 4. Tavern. It was a touching ordeal. He filled a glass with wine and pronounced his farewell benediction, after which each one present grasped his hand and gave him a brother's embrace in tender silence. He then passed from the room through a corps of light infantry, and walked to Whitehall Ferry, attended by his generals, where a barge waited to convey him to Paulus Hook on his way to Congress. When he had embarked he turned, took off his hat, and waved a silent adieu, which was returned in the same significant manner, with visible emotion upon every countenance.

In four days he reached Philadelphia, and rendered his military accounts to the proper department of the government, entirely in his own handwriting, and not a penny was charged or retained as a recompense for personal services. On the 19th he arrived in Annapolis, where Congress was in session, and on the 23d resigned the authority with which he had been invested. The public ceremonial on this occasion was conducted with great dignity and witnessed by an immense throng. When concluded, Washington immediately repaired to his seat at Mount Vernon.

James Duane was the first Mayor of New York City appointed by Governor Clinton after peace was established. He found his country-seat near Gramercy Park a pile of ashes, and all his movable effects destroyed. His wife had spent the greater part of the seven years of strife at the old manor-house of her father, Robert Livingston — the third Lord of Livingston Manor. But they were soon able to settle themselves in a comfortable habitation in the city. The mayor's court, under the administration of Duane, became the favorite and really the most important forum. It was held in a building which stood on the corner of Wall and Nassau Streets. Disorder in every man's affairs, consequent upon the long military possession of the city by the enemy, rendered the duties of the mayor extremely perplexing. Losses arising from the suspension of rents, damages done by loyalist tenantry, the destruction or removal of records and consequent indistinctness of titles, the processes of confiscation of estates, the swift mutation in the relative value of money, property of all kinds, and securities, with the sudden tightening of pecuniary obligations — the sense of which had been very easy for some years — engendered the most knotty of legal questions. Litigation became more brisk than any other department of industry. Eight lawyers only had hitherto been allowed to practice in this court; but during 1784 the restriction was removed in favor of all attorneys and counselors of

Hosted by Google

the supreme court. In consequence of this change of policy, together with the high judicial reputation of Duane, the mayor's court suddenly, and by common consent, acquired a business and an authority scarcely contemplated by the statutes creating it. The character of the city charter was not changed by the Revolution, but the controlling power which had formerly been exercised by the British government was now vested in the State. The city remained divided into seven wards, and an alderman and assistant were elected every year by the people.

Richard Varick was appointed city recorder, and by virtue of his office was the mayor's judicial colleague. As a member of Washington's military family he had become widely known, and stood well in the public confidence. He was a young man of thirty, of spotless character and broad intelligence, and stately of mien and austere in his views. He was subsequently Attorney-General of the State, and Duane's successor in the mayoralty. He is said to have been inclined to reverse the human maxim of the common law, by presuming a person guilty, if accused, until his innocence was proved.

The legislature of the State assembled in New York City on the 21st of January, the session continuing until May 12. This branch of the new government consisted of the Senate and the Assembly. **1784.** Jan. 21. Bills might originate in either house, but must be passed in both to become laws. The Senate, under the first constitution, consisted of twenty-four members, so divided into classes that the terms of six should expire each year. Lieutenant-Governor Pierre Van Cortlandt was the presiding officer; Robert Benson, who had been the clerk of the Senate through six preceding sessions, filled that office until the 18th of February, when he was succeeded by Abraham B. Bancker. James Duane, William Floyd, Ezra L'Hommedieu, Alexander McDougall, Lewis Morris, Isaac Roosevelt, Isaac Stoutenbergh, Samuel Townsend, and Stephen Ward represented the southern district, which embraced the city and adjoining counties. And from other parts of the State came Philip Schuyler, Abraham Yates, Jr., Henry Outhoudt, Jacob G. Klock, Ephraim Paine, Joseph Gasherie, John Haring, Jacobus Swartwout, Arthur Parks, William Allison, Alexander Webster, John Williams, and William B. Whiting.

The Assembly was chosen annually. It consisted, at first, of seventy members, with the power to increase one with every seventieth increase of the number of electors until it should contain three hundred members. The newly chosen membership from the metropolis embraced Robert Harper, John Lamb, Isaac Sears, Peter P. Van Zandt, John Stagg, William Malcom, Henry Rutgers, Henry Hughes, and Marinus Willett, who had been so heroic in the defense of central New York, but whose seat in the

Hosted by Google

Assembly was vacated in February from his having been appointed sheriff of the city, an office he held for many following years. John Hathorn, of Orange, was chosen Speaker of the Assembly, and John McKesson was appointed clerk.

The adjustment of public concerns was constantly retarded by the dead-lock in private affairs. In January Gouverneur Morris wrote to John Jay, from Philadelphia, "I was lately in New York, and things there are now in that kind of ferment that was rationally to be expected." Prior to the evacuation, indeed, ever since the preliminary articles of peace were signed, the Americans had been allowed access to the city, and many of the banished residents had presented claims to the British authorities for depredations upon their property. The records of these transactions show that Sir Guy Carleton and the other officers concerned acted on principles honorable and generous. For instance, De Lancey's regiment had been stationed nearly two years upon the Morris estate, at Morrisania, which was within the British lines; seventy huts had been erected, the soil cultivated, timber had been cut from four hundred and seventy acres of woodland for various purposes, and cattle and provisions had been taken whenever desired. Papers and affidavits certifying these particulars were examined by the board of commissioners appointed by Sir Guy Carleton, who reported the facts proved and the charges reasonable, and recommended that the claimant, Mrs. Morris (the mother of Gouverneur Morris, who was of the scholarly French family of Gouverneurs in early New York), be paid the full amount of her demands. The claim, amounting to upwards of eight thousand pounds, was sent to England, and subsequently liquidated, although not during that lady's lifetime.



Old Morrisania.
[Home of Gouverneur Morris.]

That portion of the seat of the Morrises known as "Old Morrisania" became the property of Gouverneur Morris. In 1800 he erected the dwelling of the accompanying illustration, from the design of a French château. It overlooks the East River just where it is joined by the

Hosted by Google

waters of Harlem River, the view from the mansion being deftly shown by our artist. It is surrounded by fine old elms and smooth lawns, and has been well preserved with few alterations by his descendants. Lewis, the elder brother of Gouverneur Morris, signer of the Declaration of Independence, possessed an ample estate a little farther inland.[1] Staats Long Morris, the brother of the patriots, who married the daughter of the Earl of Aberdeen long before the Revolution, and was a general in the British service, remained in England, and subsequently became Governor of Quebec. Richard, like his younger brother, Gouverneur, was a lawyer of original and peculiar gifts, and in 1779 was appointed Chief Justice of New York, holding the position eleven years; he married Sarah Ludlow.

The restoration of the loyalists to full citizenship became at once a question of exciting moment. The rigid laws enacted by the State had deprived many persons of their property, without any opportunity of defending themselves, which was declared contrary to the usages of all civilized nations. Living within the British lines upon one's own estate was in itself certainly no "treason." Protection was sought from the American authorities, and in some instances obtained, which encouraged others who had been attainted to return and apply for justice. Extraordinary debates ending in wrangles were of daily occurrence. "There ought, sir, no Tory to be suffered to exist in America. Until the goats are separated from the sheep, we must expect to row against the stream," exclaimed one of the able leaders of the Revolution. While others of equal rank argued eloquently in favor of forgetting and forgiving, and against persecuting men for opinions or seeming to take unmanly revenge.

The right of one party in a civil conflict to levy upon another, and the fact that the British generals exercised that right throughout the war, was urged in defense of the principle of confiscation, and finally a legislative act, embracing a decree of perpetual outlawry and banishment against certain individuals whose names were mentioned, confirmed former enactments. Popular animosity, however, gradually relaxed. Many liberal-minded men of prominence pronounced the measure arbitrary and cruel. These were instantly accused in turn of undue subservience to British influence. Then came the counter-charge of avarice, rapacity, and

[1] Lewis Morris, signer of the Declaration of Independence, was the eldest son of Judge Lewis Morris (see Vol. I. 575, 576), born at Morrisania in 1726, died in 1798; three of his sons served with distinction in the army and received the thanks of Congress, of whom Lewis was aide to Sullivan, and afterwards to Greene; James, the fourth son, married Helen Van Cortlandt, daughter of Augustus Van Cortlandt, and erected the great, square, handsome dwelling which stands upon an eminence near Fleetwood Park, the present residence of William H. Morris. The Morrises were all men of splendid physique.

Hosted by Google

resentment. Old feuds were revived, and personal quarrels reopened. The lines of party were drawn which subsequent events more strongly defined; and upon which the most important changes in the political history of the State have turned.

Business revived slowly. As spring advanced the mercantile interests of the city were discussed with vigor, and various were the methods proposed for encouraging trade. A petition from several of the prominent members of the Chamber of Commerce for a confirmation of their charter, which was said to be forfeited, was duly considered by the legislature, and on the 13th of April "An act to remove doubts concerning the Chamber of Commerce, and to confirm the rights and privileges thereof,"

April 20 became a law. Seven days later a meeting was held and the institution reorganized under the name of the "Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York." Old members, who had been exiles from the city for seven years, as well as many of those who had kept up the meetings during the war, continued or renewed their connection with the Chamber; among these were John Alsop, Daniel Phœnix, Isaac Roosevelt, the noted Whig and State senator, Robert R. Waddell, Jacobus Van Zandt, James Beekman, Gerardus Duyckinck, who lost seven houses in the fire of 1778, Daniel Ludlow, Henry Remsen, Peter Keteltas, Daniel McCormick, a rich bachelor living on Wall Street, famous for his mixture of generous hospitality, convivial habits, and strict religious principles, Theophylact Bache, former President of the Chamber, William Laight, who afterwards filled many important offices of trust, Oliver Templeton, John Murray, one of the elders in Dr. Rodgers's Church, and at a later date President of the Chamber for eight years 1798–1806, Francis Lewis, Thomas Randall, Walter Buchanan, and William Walton.

The subject of public instruction was discussed in social circles, in the pulpits, in the newspapers, and in the various political and business assemblages, during the winter and spring, without material results. Schools maintained by religious societies through voluntary contributions were reopened; the "public school," under the auspices of the Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church, was henceforward called the "charity school," and it lost its distinctive language as well as its name. Individual school enterprises of slight importance were projected, and failed for want of support. What to do with Kings College, which had been arrested in its operations eight years before, and the edifice used as a military hospital, became a question of vital interest. Finally an act of the legisla-

May 1. ture, passed on the 1st of May, created the University of the State, an institution patterned from the English University of Oxford, and amended the charter of the college, changing its name from Kings to

Hosted by Google

Columbia. The first Regents of the University were named in the act. They were men of highest eminence and scholarship, empowered to found schools and colleges in any part of the State. But in consequence of their residences in different and remote sections, a quorum could not be assembled, and the system was altered the following November, and new appointments made in the law. Even the new system was found inoperative. It was finally proposed by Hamilton, and recommended by a committee of the Regents, able men, whose superiors could not be found in the nation, that each subordinate institution composing the University should have its own officers and trustees, with governing powers, but subject to the inspection and control of the Board of Regents. An act to this effect passed the legislature April 13, 1787, and is still in force. Thus did New York, with singular foresight, provide her grand scheme of public instruction, when only one poverty-stricken college, and not an academy or a common school, existed within her borders. The University now consists of thirty-seven colleges and two hundred and twenty-four academies, all acting in harmony, and greatly influencing some thirteen thousand common schools, whose superintendent is himself a member of the Board of Regents.

Governor George Clinton was the first Chancellor of the University, and Rev. Dr. Rodgers Vice-Chancellor.[1] Columbia College was reorganized and a committee empowered to provide, in a temporary way, for what might be most needful, but want of funds prevented final arrangements until 1787. The first student was De Witt Clinton, a precocious boy of fifteen. His father, General James Clinton, on his journey to place De Witt in Princeton College, stopped in New York City one summer morning of 1784. Mayor Duane was a member of the above committee, and, unwilling that a Clinton should go out of the State for his education, hastened to the elegant scholar, Rev. Dr. William Cochrane, and induced him to undertake the tuition of the youth, and such others as might apply, until professorships in the college should be established. Young Clinton, who had been prepared for this ordeal in the academy at Kingston, under John Addison, was examined in presence of the Regents and admitted to the junior class. He was graduated as Bachelor of Arts in 1786. The first President of Columbia College, William Samuel Johnson, son of the first President of this institution as Kings College, was elected in the spring of 1787; up to which time a president's duties were discharged by the various professors in turn.

[1] John Jay was the second Chancellor; after him, George Clinton again filled the office four years; and Morgan Lewis, Daniel D. Tompkins, John Tayler, Simeon De Witt, Stephen Van Rensselear, James King, Peter Wendell, Gerrit Y. Lansing, John V. L. Pruyn, and Erastus C. Benedict have followed in regular succession until the present date, 1880.

Hosted by Google

Among the early Regents were Bishop Provost, Rev. Dr. Livingston, Rev. Dr. John Mason, Rev. John Gano, John Jay, Leonard Lispénard, Walter Livingston, John Rutherford, Morgan Lewis, Anthony Hoffmann, Lewis Morris, John Lawrence, Ebenezer Russell, Dr. John Cochrane, Dr. Charles McKnight, Alexander Hamilton, Walter Livingston, Thomas Jones, Mathew Clarkson, and Abraham B. Bancker, nearly all of whom were characters familiar to the reader. Rev. John Gano, a clerical scholar of rare culture, pastor of the infant Baptist Church for sixteen years prior to the war, had been a chaplain in the army, and upon returning to the city with the establishment of peace could find but thirty-seven out of his two hundred church-members. Their little house of worship had been used as a stable, but was soon repaired. Mr. Gano labored successfully in this field until 1788, when he resigned his charge and removed into the wilds of Kentucky. During his ministry he received into the church by baptism two hundred and ninety-seven persons. His successor was Rev. Dr. Benjamin Foster, who filled the pulpit ten years. The third pastor was Rev. William Collier. During the ministry of the latter the old structure was replaced by a new one, sixty-five feet by eighty, and the dedication sermon was preached in May, 1802, by Rev. Dr. Stephen Gano, of Providence, Rhode Island, son of Rev. John Gano.[1]

Dr. Charles McKnight was not only one of the Regents, but was presently appointed Professor of Surgery and Anatomy in Columbia College, and also Port Physician of New York. He had served the country throughout the Revolution, was three years "Senior Surgeon of the Flying Hospital," and towards the close of the war became "Surgeon General and Chief Physician" of the army. He was specially distinguished as a practical surgeon, and at the time of his death, writes Duer, "was without a rival in that branch of his profession."[2] His wife was a

[1] See Vol. I. 753. Stephen Gano, a Huguenot, whose parents settled in New Rochelle, married Ann Walton. Their grandson was Rev. John Gano; his sons were: John, of Cincinnati; Isaac; Richard Montgomery, grandfather of Dr. James M. Gano, of New York, George A. Gano, of Denver, Colorado, and Joseph J. Gano, of Pittsfield, Illinois; Rev. Stephen, of Providence; and William. Among the prominent members of the family in Cincinnati is John Gano, of *The Cincinnati Commercial.*

[2] Dr. Charles McKnight was born in 1750, at Cranberry, New Jersey, and died in 1791. He was the son of Rev. Charles McKnight, a Presbyterian clergyman who came to this country about the year 1740, and became pastor of the united congregations of Cranberry and Allentown, New Jersey, and afterwards of Shrewsbury and Middleton Point. The McKnight family, originally of Scotland, located in the County of Antrim, Ireland, about the close of the sixteenth century, where they subsequently distinguished themselves in the cause of William III. The father of Rev. Charles McKnight was Rev. John McKnight, a divine of great eminence, whose father, Mr. John McKnight, was one of the defenders of Londonderry in the memorable siege of that city, and afterwards lost an arm at the decisive battle of the Boyne. The church at Middleton Point was burned by a detachment of British troops in 1777, and

Hosted by Google

lady of great personal beauty and social prominence. She was Mary, the only daughter of the famous lawyer and patriot, John Morin Scott, who, as the young widow of a British officer, Colonel John Litchfield, spent the greater part of the period of hostilities within the British lines, and is said to have furnished material information to her father and to Governor Livingston, with whose daughters she was in constant correspondence. Her intense devotion to the American cause is not surprising, when we remember the blended races to which she owed her ancestry. Her father was of ancient Scotch lineage; her mother, Helena Rutgers, of New York, was of the prominent old Dutch stock; and her grandmother, Marie Morin, was from an equally high-toned French Huguenot family who settled in New York after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Some of Mrs. McKnight's spirited letters are in existence; two or three written to Miss Anna Van Horne, one of the daughters of David Van Horne, afterwards the wife of William Edgar, give thrilling glimpses into the midnight scenes of that summer of alarm, 1776. The Scott family had taken refuge in New Jersey, and rumors that the British were about to land were perpetual. "We have," she writes, "our coach standing before our door every night, and the horses harnessed, ready to make our escape if we have time." They were, it seems, ordered to fly one night in the midst of a violent thunder-storm. "After proceeding about a mile," she says, "old daddy Cæsar was so frightened he could not manage the horses, so mamma sent me outside to drive."

The press was in a formative state, like all other institutions. Journalism had not yet become a profession. Existing newspapers were few, and managed by ambitious political chiefs, as armies are manipulated by their generals. The sheets were small upon which they were printed, and crowded with advertisements. The reading matter, what there was of it, was contributed by scholars and politicians, but nearly every writer was bound to party, and many years were to elapse before the germ of what is now one of the chief glories of America acquired anything approximating to full freedom of thought and action.

In the early part of 1784 the New York Legislature, learning of the death of John Holt, the printer, who had been "of eminent service to his country," employed Mrs. Elizabeth Holt, his widow, in printing the journals and other matters connected with the government; she also conducted the paper for a time which Holt had published in Poughkeepsie during the conflict, and resumed in New York in 1783, called *The Independent Gazette, or New York Journal revived.* Four newspapers flour-

the Rev. Charles McKnight was carried a prisoner to New York, where he died January 1, 1778. He was present at the battle of Princeton, and stood so near General Mercer when he fell as to receive a severe saber-cut on his head. He was one of the trustees of Princeton College.

Hosted by Google

ished in the city during the greater period of its occupancy by the British troops; in order to have the advantage of a daily newspaper, an arrangement was made with the proprietors of each to publish on different days. Thus Rivington's *Royal Gazette*, which was the most notable of any for its extraordinary untruths and abuse of the Americans, appeared on Wednesdays and Saturdays, Hugh Gaine's *Gazette or Mercury* on Mondays, and two others of lesser importance on Thursdays and Fridays. As the war drew to a close Rivington's loyalty cooled. He wished to continue his residence in New York, where he had established a bookstore. His paper dropped its appendages of royalty and appeared as a plain democratic newspaper, entitled *Rivington's New York Gazette and Universal Advertiser*. But he was disturbed by the people, and relinquished the enterprise before the end of a twelvemonth. Hugh Gaine's paper closed with the war. He had been distinguished by the facility with which he could balance himself upon the political fence; when fortune was with the British he was the most loyal of kingly subjects, when with America he was a patriot of deepest dye. "When the contest was doubtful he was the completest pattern of a genuine doubter." Samuel Loudon, editor of *The New York Packet and American Advertiser*, returned from Fishkill to New York on the conclusion of peace; in 1785 he changed his publication, which was the political opponent of *The New York Journal*, from a weekly to a daily. Loudon himself was an elder in the Scotch Presbyterian Church of New York.

The population of the city, a practical fusion of many elements and nationalities, was in a changeful condition during the entire period comprehended in the present chapter. Homes were little more than resting-places. Everything was mixed and uncertain. Houses were occupied one day and vacant the next. People moved into the town, but others moved away; thus there was no material increase of abiding citizens. Rubbish and ruins still marked the track of the great fire of 1776, and one or two hundred horses and cows might have been seen grazing in the open fields about Reade Street, where there was a burying-ground for negroes, and scarcely a single house. In the rear of the Old City Hospital, between Duane and Anthony Streets, was a rural orchard so secluded that it was chosen for the scene of a duel in 1786, in which one of the parties was mortally wounded. The map of Manhattan Island (page 68) forcibly illustrates the size of New York City at this juncture, a mere speck in comparison with its present proportions. Its population did not at any time within these four years exceed twenty-four thousand. Its first directory, published in 1786, was a little primer of eighty-two pages, containing nine hundred names of individuals and firms, with statistics

Hosted by Google

of a varied character, an almanac, and a table of coins; this was produced by David Franks, who advertised himself as an attorney, and Shepherd Kollock, formerly of *The New Jersey Journal*, both editors as well as enterprising printers; Kollock was also a judge of common pleas for thirty-five years. Public whipping was still in vogue for various misdemeanors, men were imprisoned for debt, and colored slaves occupied a niche in every household of importance.

Several prominent military characters passed away during the same period. Lord Stirling died in Albany, in January, 1783. He had rendered constant and important services to the country since the beginning of the war, and was deeply lamented by all who knew him in public or in private life. His estates were sacrificed at forced sales, and nothing was left his family of value. Oliver De Lancey died in England in November, 1785, at the age of sixty-seven;[1] he had fought for George III. with a self-sacrificing heroism vastly exceeding that of England's native generals; but from his life-long connection with New York affairs, the news of his death was received with tearful sadness. Alexander McDougall died in June, 1786. He was a member of the New York senate at the time of his decease, one of the most fearless of politicians, with original and intelligent views. Isaac Roosevelt succeeded him as President of the Bank of New York. The same month was marked by the death of Nathaniel Greene, who next to Washington was esteemed one of the greatest generals America had as yet produced. He breathed out his valuable life at the beautiful plantation near Savannah which had been presented to him by the State of Georgia.

Meanwhile there were many notable occasions for rejoicing. Both Lafayette and Washington were received with august ceremonies by the city. Another great day was when John Jay returned from his successful European mission, July 24, 1784. The mayor and corporation greeted him with an address of welcome, presenting the freedom of the city in a gold box.

[1] Oliver De Lancey, fifth son of Etienne De Lancey (born in 1718, died in 1785), married Phila, daughter of Jacob Franks, of Philadelphia, in 1742. (See Vol. I. 531, 532.) Their six children were: Stephen, married Cornelia Barclay, afterwards Chief Justice of the Bahamas and Governor of Tobago; Oliver, who succeeded André as Adjutant-General of the British army; Susanna, married General Sir William Draper; Phila, married Stephen Payne Galwey, counselor to the Governor of Antigua; Anna, married John Harris Cruger; and Charlotte, married Field Marshal Sir David Dundas, K. C. B. The only son of Stephen (elder son of Oliver) was Sir William Howe De Lancey, K. C. B., who was killed at the battle of Waterloo. The eldest daughter of Stephen, Susan De Lancey, married for her second husband Sir Hudson Lowe, Governor of St. Helena during the captivity of Napoleon the Great. Susanna, the sister of Oliver De Lancey, who married Sir Peter Warren (see Vol. I. 586, 588), had three daughters: Anna, married (1758) Charles Fitzroy, first Baron Southampton; Charlotte, married (1768) Willoughby Bertie, fourth Earl of Abingdon; Susanna, married William Skinner of New Jersey, whose only child, Susan Maria, married her cousin, Major-General Henry, third Viscount Gage.

Hosted by Google

The utmost enthusiasm prevailed. He was caressed and fêted. Every one delighted in doing him honor. The whole city was brilliant with festivities. While upon the eve of sailing for home he had received a farewell letter from David Hartley, exceptionably interesting in this connection as an illustration of the good-will, respect, and confidence which our New York envoy commanded in Great Britain, in which occurs the following paragraph: —

"Your public and private conduct has impressed me with unalterable esteem for you as a public and private friend; . . . if I should not have the good fortune to see you again, I hope you will always think of me as eternally and unalterably attached to the principles of renewing and establishing the most intimate connection of amity and intercourse and alliance between our two countries. I presume that the subject of American intercourse will soon be renewed in Parliament, as the term of the present act approaches to its expiration. The resumption of this subject in Parliament will probably give ground to some specific negotiation — you know my sentiments already. I thank you for your inquiries concerning my sister. She continues much in the same way as when you were at Bath — that is to say, as we hope in a fair way to final recovery, though very slowly. My brother is well, and joins with me in sincere good wishes to yourself and family, and to the renovation of all those ties of consanguinity and friendship which have for ages been interwoven between our respective countries."[1]

Chancellor Robert R. Livingston wrote on the 30th from Clermont, congratulating Jay upon his safe return. Livingston had retired from his position as Secretary of Foreign Affairs in 1783, but Congress had not yet been able to fill his place satisfactorily. The responsible office was tendered to Jay; and while the question of his acceptance was in abeyance, the legislature of New York appointed him one of its delegates to Congress, which convened in November at Trenton. Jay did not hesitate to pronounce the place of meeting inconvenient, and, fully aware of the necessity of secrecy in diplomatic affairs, was unwilling to assume the duties of state unless he could have the selection of his own clerks — appointments hitherto under the control of Congress. After considerable spirited discussion it was determined that New York City should be the future seat of Congress, to which place it removed on the 23d of December, 1784. Elbridge Gerry wrote to General Warren, under the same date: —

"It is fortunate that we arrived here as we did, for otherwise Congress would by this time have been in Philadelphia, and the treasury in such hands

[1] *David Hartley to John Jay*, March 2, 1784. This letter, from among the private papers of Chief Justice Jay, and for which the author is indebted to the courtesy of Hon. John Jay, is now for the first time published.

Hosted by Google

as you and I could not approve. There was a stronger party formed against us than I remember to have seen, but I think it will subside and matters be in a good train again. We have carried two great points to-day by passing an ordinance, first, to appoint three Commissioners to lay out a district on the branch of either side of the Delaware, within eight miles of this place, to purchase the soil and enter into contracts for erecting suitable buildings; secondly, to adjourn to New York and reside there until suitable buildings are prepared. This I consider a fortunate affair in every respect but one. It is so disagreeable to our worthy secretary, that there is reason to apprehend he will resign his appointment. We have been so happy also as to remove some objections on the part of Mr. Jay to the acceptance of his office, and he yesterday took the oaths and entered on the business of his department."

Thus the year 1785 dawned upon New York City as the capital of the nation. The corporation tendered Congress the use of the City Hall on Wall Street, together with such other public buildings as might be necessary for its accommodation. Bishop Provost was appointed chaplain, through the nomination of Walter Livingston. Foreign affairs were organized by John Jay on a modest scale. But he found them peculiarly burdensome through the want of executive authority in the administration. His thoughts were at once directed towards altering the existing Constitution. "Until this be done," he wrote on May 10, 1785, "the chain which holds us together will be too feeble to bear much opposition or exertion, and we shall be daily mortified by seeing the links of it giving way and calling for repair, one after another."

An interesting commercial event thrilled New York before the end of May. The ship *Empress*, the first vessel ever sent from the United States to China, returned to this port with flying colors. May 19. An official account of the important voyage was at once communicated to Secretary Jay, which he laid before Congress. The respect with which the American flag had been treated by a people who had hitherto but confused ideas of the new republic, together with the successful establishment of a direct trade with that distant empire, gave fresh impulse and energy to every branch of industry, and opened new objects to all America.

Spain by this time found it expedient to solicit the friendship of the United States. After signing the treaties in Paris, she had invited Jay to resume his negotiations at Madrid, which he declined; and America had since shown no inclination to court her favor. But before Congress adjourned for the summer, a Spanish plenipotentiary arrived, and Secretary Jay had the singular satisfaction of conducting him to the Congress chamber in Wall Street, and announcing him to the dignified body there

Hosted by Google

assembled. When his commission and letters of credence had been delivered and read, Don Diego Gardoqui addressed the president and members, standing uncovered while declaring the affection of his master, the King of Spain, for them, "his great and beloved friends."

Full powers had been given to its ministers in Europe by Congress to treat with Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. John Adams, still in Holland, had been actively studying the habits and forms of these African governments and their treaties. He was in Versailles, consulting Vergennes about money and presents — who said that "the Emperor of Morocco was the most interested man in the world, and the most greedy of money" — when news came that he had been elected to represent the United States at the Court of Great Britain. In reply to the felicitations of Vergennes, he said he did not know but it merited compassion rather than felicitation. "Ah, why?" asked Vergennes, with astonishment. "Because, as you know, it is a species of degradation in the eyes of Europe, after having been accredited to the King of France, to be sent to any other court." "But, permit me to say," continued Vergennes, "it is a great thing to be the first ambassador from your country to the country you sprang from. It is a mark." The Duke of Dorset congratulated Adams, and told him he would "be stared at a great deal." Adams replied that he "trembled at the thought of going there; and was afraid they would gaze with evil eyes." One of the foreign ambassadors, surprised to learn that Adams had never been in England but once, exclaimed, "But you have relations there?" "None at all," replied Adams. "None! how can that be? You are of English extraction?" "Neither my father or mother, grandfather or grandmother, great-grandfather or great-grandmother, nor any other relation that I know of or care a farthing for, has been in England these hundred and fifty years; so that you see I have not one drop of blood in my veins but what is American." "Ay, we have seen proof enough of that," answered the Minister.

Before the end of May Adams was in London, where he was treated with distinguished consideration. The incidents of his first interview with George III. were faithfully published to the remotest ends of the civilized world. The king pronounced his address "extremely proper," and in reply said, "I will be very frank with you. I was the last to consent to the separation; but, the separation having been made, and having become inevitable, I have always said, as I say now, that I would be the first to meet the friendship of the United States as an independent power." During the conversation which followed, the king asked Adams if he was just from France, and being answered in the affirmative, laughingly remarked, "An opinion prevails among some people that you are

Hosted by Google

not the most attached of all your countrymen to the manners of France." With graceful pleasantry Adams admitted the truth of the speculation, saying, "I have no attachment but to my own country." "An honest man will never have any other," was the quick rejoinder of the king.

Wall Street, notable for having been the scene of many of the most significant and exciting events in American history, was not only where the first ambassador was chosen for Great Britain, and his instructions elaborately prepared by Secretary Jay of New York, but it was in a tumult of enthusiasm one chilly day late in the autumn of this year, on the occasion of the reception by Congress of the first consul-general from George III. to the United States, Sir John Temple, whose commission had been executed in February. Here, too, in the old historic City Hall, which was soon to be burnished anew, Thomas Jefferson was elected (March 10) Minister to France, Franklin having earnestly asked permission to return to America, and John Rutledge was appointed to the Netherlands (July 5) in place of Adams; here the grave questions necessary for the dignified maintenance of the peace secured with the various nations of Europe were discussed daily; here Secretary Jay met the offers of Spain in regard to the navigation of the Mississippi, with the offer to forbear navigating its waters below the southern boundary of the republic for a term of twenty or thirty years, while refusing to relinquish the right — which the Spanish Minister would not concede; and here the remonstrance of Congress at what was deemed an infraction of the treaty, embodied in a memorial to the British Ministry, demanding the immediate removal of its garrisons from no less than seven specified military posts on the frontiers, was penned, and a secret act immediately passed, limited to one year, giving Secretary Jay discretionary power to inspect letters in the post-office. The probable motive for this last extraordinary measure was to discover the nature of instructions sent from England to the commanders of the garrisons, but it is not known that the power was ever exercised. Nov. 24.

Congress elected Samuel Osgood, Walter Livingston, and John Lewis Gervais commissioners of the treasury. But the New York Legislature repealed an act which granted the revenues of its port to the United States, and established a custom-house and a system of its own. Every effort to restore to Congress the disposition and control of this revenue proved unsuccessful. The city was the great commercial mart of the Union; and the collectors were appointed by, and made amenable exclusively to, the State authorities. In 1786 the legislature made the import duties payable to the bills of credit issued by the State. Congress, perceiving the national credit more than ever endangered by this enact-

Hosted by Google

ment, requested Governor Clinton to convene the legislature for its reconsideration. He declined, upon the ground that no sufficient cause was shown for the exercise of this extraordinary power, the decision having been recent and the result of mature deliberation. Shortly afterward a proposition to negotiate a loan in Europe was referred by Congress to Secretary Jay, who reported that it appeared to him improper to inaugurate any such proceeding, as the Federal government was rather paternal and persuasive, than coercive and efficient. "Congress," he said, "can make no certain dependence on the States for any specific sums, to be required and paid at any given periods, and consequently is not in a capacity safely to pledge its honor and faith as a borrower." Congress, indeed, had not even the power to regulate trade so as to counteract the unfriendly regulations of other nations; each State having reserved to itself the right of imposing, collecting, and appropriating duties on its own commerce.



Specimen of Counterfeit Money.
[Copied through the courtesy of Mr. Robert Benson.]

To add to the pecuniary embarrassments of the time, forged notes and counterfeit bills circulated to an alarming extent, notwithstanding the severe penalties involved. William Stephens Smith, secretary of legation under Adams in London, had detected and arrested several persons in this employment while in the execution of his office as commissioner to superintend the embarkation of loyalists from the port of New York. The sketch is the fac-simile of a curious relic preserved by Egbert Benson; it was delivered into court by the grand jury in May, 1787, with bill against Mr. Field, the man who attempted to pass it, "knowingly."

The first banking institution in New York originated in the brain of Alexander Hamilton, and commenced operations in 1784, under "articles

Hosted by Google

of association," drawn by Hamilton, who was a member of its first board of directors. Hamilton, as well as Gouverneur Morris, had materially assisted Robert Morris in the establishment of the "Bank of North America" at Philadelphia, the first organized bank in the United States, chartered December 31, 1781; and Hamilton had filled the office, for a considerable period, of receiver of the Continental taxes in the State of New York, exerting himself the while to impress upon the legislature the importance of his favorite financial ideas concerning a national bank. The "Bank of New York" was not, however, chartered until May 21, 1791.

"It takes time to make sovereigns of subjects," wrote Jay to Jefferson in the autumn of 1785. The pressure of a common danger having been removed, the defects of the existing confederation were actually menacing the country with ruin. The loyalists were exultant, and said the Americans had found "their idol, their phantom, independency, a mere ignis fatuus," in short, that they were incapable of governing themselves. It was clear that one body of men, daily changing its members, could never manage the three great departments of sovereignty — legislative, judicial, and executive — with convenience or effect. Obstacles of a startling character interposed to prevent the execution of the treaty, and there were symptoms of uneasiness among the Indians, and rumors of secret preparations in Canada, as if for another war. Congress discovered, upon investigation, that laws enacted by at least five of the States, of which New York was one, restrained the collection of debts due to British subjects, in manifest violation of the treaty; and it called upon them to repeal such acts, but had no authority to compel acquiescence.

Affairs were approaching a crisis. Meanwhile a convention, proposed by James Madison in the legislature of Virginia, to consider the expediency of a uniform system of commercial regulations, was held at Annapolis. Delegates were present from five States, Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York. Alexander Hamilton, who had recently attacked the problem of self-government with the keen instincts of a veteran, represented New York. Nothing of importance was accomplished by this assemblage except a recommendation to Congress, which resulted in the appointment of delegates to meet in Philadelphia the following May, for the sole and express purpose of revising the articles of confederation. 1786. Sept.

Richard Henry Lee was president of Congress in 1785, and Charles Thompson secretary. To the latter we owe the careful preservation of the journals of Congress through the stormy period. He was the sole secretary from 1774 to 1789, and made two copies of the records with his own hand. His life was singularly noble and upright, and his devotion

Hosted by Google

to the interests of the nation in its infancy deserving of immortal honor. He was a classical scholar as well as a cultivated gentleman, and the friend of all the great men of his time. President Lee entertained guests three times a week, but never invited ladies, having none at his own house; John Quincy Adams enjoyed his hospitality during a visit to New York in the hot summer of 1785, and writing to his sister in London of the duties of the presidential office, said, "He is obliged, in this weather, to sit in Congress from eleven in the morning until four in the afternoon, the warmest and most disagreeable part of the day. It was expected that Congress would adjourn during the dog-days, at least, but they have so much business that a recess, however short, would leave them behindhand."

John Quincy Adams, then eighteen, had just returned from Europe to complete his education at Harvard College. He had accompanied his father to Holland and France, and served as private secretary to Francis Dana, who from his secretaryship with John Adams was sent as plenipotentiary to Russia in 1781. Young Adams was the recipient of many civilities in New York. He dined with Secretary Jay, with Theodore Sedgwick, and with Governor George Clinton; breakfasted with Elbridge Gerry, who married Miss Thompson of New York; and wrote to his sister of taking tea, July 20, with David Ramsey, the historian and author from South Carolina, where he met the Spanish Minister, and also Van Berckel, the first Dutch Minister to the United States. He visited Rufus King, member of Congress from New England, who married, in 1786, Mary, the only daughter of John Alsop, and made New York his permanent residence. "I am pleased with these intermarriages," wrote Secretary Jay to John Adams, in May of the last-named year; "they tend to assimilate the States, and to promote one of the first wishes of my heart, to see the people of America become one nation in every respect." John Adams upon receipt of the intelligence, immediately wrote a letter of congratulation to Mr. King, in which he said, "Your marriage, as well as that of Mr. Gerry, gives me the more pleasure, probably, as a good work of the same kind, for connecting Massachusetts and New York in the bonds of love, was going on here"; and proceeds to announce the marriage of his daughter Abigail to William Stephens Smith of New York, the ceremony having just been performed in London by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Asaph.

Secretary and Mrs. Knox gave an elegant dinner at their residence four miles out of the city, at which John Quincy Adams met several celebrities. He described Lady Kitty Duer, the daughter of Lord Stirling, who was present, as "neither young nor handsome"; "but," writes

Hosted by Google

Griswold at a later date, "she would not have been thought old by a man over eighteen, and she had been, if she was not then, one of the sweetest looking women in New York City." The accompanying portrait, copied from an exquisite miniature-painting, executed not far from the same date, possesses exceptional interest, from the fact that Lady Duer was a genuine New-Yorker, descended from the famous James Alexander, and the first De Peyster of New York, and through her mother from the Livingstons and Schuylers, and was herself the mother of two of New York's great jurists and men of letters, William Alexander Duer, President of Columbia College, and Judge John Duer. Young Adams visited the Smith family, at Jamaica, Long Island, into which his sister was about to marry, and writes of six daughters, saying, "Sally strikes most at first sight; she is tall, has a very fine shape, and a vast deal of vivacity in her eyes, which are of a light blue. She has the ease and elegance of the French ladies, without their loquacity." She afterwards married Charles Adams, the brother of John Quincy Adams.



Lady Kitty Duer.
[From a miniature painting.]
[Copied through the courtesy of William Betts, Esq.]

While the social and business aspects of the city were brightened by the presence of Congress, the loyalist controversy increased in bitterness. Attempts to recover confiscated property were vigorously upheld by one party and rancorously opposed by the other. Alexander Hamilton never wavered in his efforts to soften the malice of those who would place the adherents to the Crown beyond the pale of human sympathy. The magnanimous General Philip Schuyler battled, in the New York senate, for moderation and mercy. William Samuel Johnson, who had himself been imprisoned by his neighbors in Stratford, Connecticut, in the summer of 1779, on suspicion of friendship for the enemy while making use of his personal acquaintance with Tryon to prevent the burning of the town, was in Congress, and exerted a powerful influence in New York towards harmonizing conflicting interests. But the hate and passions of the hour prevailed. The effects of a bloody war could not be obliterated in one decade. Men

Hosted by Google

who had suffered were inexorable. The laws which were by many pronounced vindictive remained unrepealed. Under an "Act for the speedy sale of the confiscated and forfeited estates," passed by the Legislature of New York, May 12, 1784, the city estate of James De Lancey, eldest son of Lieutenant-Governor James De Lancey, was sold in lots, for $234,198.75. This vast property, in the neighborhood of Grand Street, had a water-front of over a mile on the East River. The purchasers were former tenants of De Lancey, citizens, and speculators. Its assessed real value at the present day is upwards of sixty-three millions of dollars.[1]

James De Lancey was on one of his accustomed summer visits to England when the war began, and, unwilling to take up arms against his native land, he did not return to New York. As the prospect darkened he sent for his family. His wife, whom he married in 1771, was Margaret, daughter of Chief Justice William Allen of Pennsylvania, and granddaughter of the celebrated lawyer, Andrew Hamilton.[2] Her sister Ann was the wife of Governor John Penn;[3] her brother James married Elizabeth Lawrence, and their daughter Mary wedded (in 1796) Henry Walter Livingston, of Livingston Manor,[4] and was known as "Lady Mary" in New York society, where for upwards of half a century she was famed for her graceful and profuse hospitality, and esteemed one of the most lovely characters of her time. The De Lanceys were the strongest and most conspicuous loyalists of the Revolution, as the Livingstons were leaders in the cause of America. The De Lanceys were an extensive as well as a powerful family, held posts of honor under the Crown, were men of enormous wealth, of which one instance has been given above, and were active, high-spirited, and brave to a fault. Their attachment to the Crown was peculiar from the fact that the race was a mixture of Dutch and French blood without any English alloy.

The feud, long-fed and well-fanned, between the De Lanceys and the Livingstons, which the reader will remember covered the period of nearly a quarter of a century prior to the Revolution, burned fiercely at this juncture from a thousand directions. Little flames illumined the Nova Scotia skies, shot across the Canadian boundaries, lighted the dreary

[1] See map of De Lancey's estate, Vol. I. 616. "Abstract of Sales," with purchasers' names and prices paid, may be found in *De Lancey's Notes to Jones's History of New York in the Revolution*, Vol. II. 540 - 559.

[2] See portrait of Andrew Hamilton, Vol. I. 551.

[3] A fine painting by Benjamin West is preserved among Chief Justice Allen's descendants, which represents a family fête in the grounds of Governor John Penn, at his seat on the Schuylkill, Philadelphia, the site of the Centennial Exposition of 1876, which contains portraits of Penn and his wife, of all the Allen family, and of West himself — who said "he never executed a better painting."

[4] See sketch of Livingston manor-house, built by Henry Walter Livingston, Vol. I. 320.

Hosted by Google

coasts of Newfoundland, raged under the tropical sun of the Bahamas and the Bermudas, and sent forth a lurid glare from England, Scotland, and Ireland. Each party endeavored to blacken the character of the other by every known means. Attached to both, as in all civil wars, were persons whose crimes against humanity deserved swift punishment. Instances were innumerable where such escaped, and men of candor, veracity, and honor bore the obloquy. If the termination of the war could have been followed with an oblivion of its offenses, New York would have been spared years of internal agitation. James De Lancey was the agent of the committee of loyalists chosen from each State to obtain compensation from the English government for losses "sustained by the faithful subjects of the Crown during the late unhappy dissensions in America." In 1788 he drafted a formal address to the commission organized under the four several acts of Parliament, passed in the years 1783, 1785, 1786, and 1787, for investigation into the merits of each particular claim, with a petition to Parliament for information "concerning the general rules and principles adopted in pushing inquiries so interesting to the public." Five years' weary working for the liquidation of claims in England, amounting to many millions, was not calculated to soften anger towards kinsmen and countrymen who had been instrumental in enacting confiscation laws in America. These were denounced as partial, unjust, malicious, and avaricious. England admitted the wrong perpetrated upon the colonies. But the loyalists, wounded upon all sides, were apparently beyond the pale of healing influences. Of the seven sons of Peter De Lancey of Westchester, James, before the war high sheriff of the county, was the famous commander of the "Cow Boys," and retired to Nova Scotia, where he was appointed counselor to the governor. It is said that when he turned his back forever upon his large possessions in the beautiful valley of the Bronx his iron heart was torn with emotion and he wept aloud. His brother Oliver, next younger than himself, was a lieutenant in the British navy, which position he resigned because he would not fight against his native land. Of their five sisters, Anne was the wife of John Cox, of Philadelphia; Alice was Mrs. Ralph Izard; Jane was Mrs. John Watts; and Susanna was Mrs. Thomas Barclay — the mother of six sons, Henry, De Lancey, Thomas, George, Sir Anthony, and Beverley Barclay, and of four daughters afterwards prominent in society, Mrs. Schuyler Livingston, Mrs. Simon Fraser, Mrs. Peter G. Stuyvesant, and Mrs. William H. Parsons.

John Peter, fourth and youngest son of Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey — whose son, William Heathcote De Lancey, was the first Bishop of Western New York — the brother of James in London, and of Mrs. Judge

Hosted by Google

Thomas Jones and Mrs. William Walton, of New York,[1] had received a military education in England, and been four years in the regular British army at the commencement of the war; he was then twenty-two years of age. He returned to America in 1789, having received the Heathcote estate of his mother at Scarsdale, and a small portion of the estate of his father in New York.

The Livingstons were even more numerous than the De Lanceys, with hardly less wealth. They were in power, which inspired anything but love in the breasts of their conquered adversaries. They divided the control of the river counties with the Van Rensselaers and Schuylers, whose great manorial estates lay to the north of their own, and were leaders in commerce and law as well as agriculture. At least nine prominent men at this date, of national celebrity, bore the name of Livingston. They were of distinguished Scotch lineage, with a proved pedigree of at least seven hundred years, with plenty of republican Dutch blood handed along through intermarriages with the Schuylers, Beekmans, and other Holland families of colonial New York. And besides the Livingstons themselves, many public men of influence had married Livingston wives, not least among whom were John Jay, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and James Duane, Mayor of the city.

It has been sagely remarked that "an intimate knowledge of the domestic history of nations is absolutely necessary to the prognosis of political events." It is certain that no correct understanding of the nature of political parties in early New York can be obtained without carefully observing the endless ramifications of kinship. Those who have in former pages traced the great family quarrel of the De Lanceys and Livingstons until merged in the Revolution, can now see it color the whole loyalist controversy; and its results are to be felt for many a long year. In no other State had the war made such a division in families as in New York. Two of the Van Cortlandts, cousins, fought on opposite sides. General Philip Schuyler was the first cousin of General Oliver De Lancey, their mothers being sisters; he bore also the same relationship to the wife of Counselor John Watts, whose daughter was



Walton Arms.

[1] The Waltons were among the great merchants of New York both before and after the Revolution; they endeavored to be neutral in the contest. See Vol. I. 684, 685, 686. The name William was carried through a full century. The family intermarried with the Beekmans, Verplancks, De Lanceys, Crugers, Ogdens, and Morrises. Mrs. Cornelia Beekman Walton, daughter of Dr. William Beekman, a lady greatly beloved, who had lived in New Jersey during the war, died at the "Old Walton House" on Franklin Square in 1786.

Hosted by Google

the wife of Sir John Johnson. The De Peysters, who, like the De Lanceys, were chiefly loyalists, had intermarried with the Van Cortlandts in nearly every generation. And the mother of John Jay was a Van Cortlandt. There was never a more curious mixture of conflicting interests than agitated New York through the remainder of the century; sharp denunciation, rancorous abuse, heart-burnings, and maledictions, rather than the memory of gallant deeds and heroic sacrifices, long survived the shock of armies.

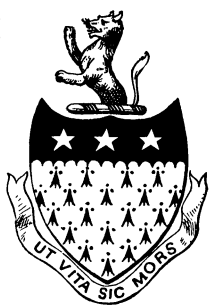
The lawyers of the city were full of business. They were mostly men of promise, eminence, and conspicuous talents. The community inevitably measured every candidate for a professional career, and the unlearned or mediocre aspirant stood at fatal disadvantage. Hamilton had commenced practice at the bar, and already demonstrated to the world that he was a great lawyer. Aaron Burr, small of stature, with gigantic ambition, cool, wary, artificial, and imposing of manner, in his arguments curt and severe, confining himself invariably to a few strong and prominent points, rarely lost a case. Melancthon Smith was in the high tide of a successful practice. Also Egbert Benson, who was more profoundly versed in the principles of philosophy upon which the law rests, and in technical information, than any other lawyer of the period. James Kent, afterwards chancellor, son of Moss Kent, surrogate of Rensselaer County, was a student in Benson's office; he was first admitted to the bar in 1787, and soon acquired habits of vast industry and method, and a taste for literary labor. John Sloss Hobart had been elected one of the three justices of the Supreme Court; he was nearly fifty, with perhaps no special distinguishing trait, but possessing an assemblage of qualities which gave him great influence. Samuel Jones, the elder, styled the "father of the New York bar," had been an ardent loyalist, and subsequently was appointed Recorder of the city and then Comptroller of the State. Brockholst Livingston, the brother-in-law of John Jay, was admitted to the bar in 1783, at the age of twenty-seven, and was one of the most accomplished scholars, able advocates, and fluent speakers of his time in the city — but violent in his political feelings and conduct. Edward Livingston, youngest brother of the chancellor, who subsequently acquired world-wide reputation as a jurist, commenced practice in 1785, at the age of twenty-one. Morgan Lewis, whose wife was sister to the latter, soon became attorney-general of the State — in 1791 — and two years later chief justice of New York. Richard Morris was the present chief justice, having succeeded John Jay in 1779; he filled the office until 1790, when, being sixty years of age, he retired, and Robert Yates was appointed in his stead. John Cozine and Robert

Hosted by Google

Troup were both able lawyers, and men of much general information; Cozine is described as good-humored and amiable, inclined to indolence, corpulence, and high living. Josiah Ogden Hoffman was younger, but rose quickly to distinction. His forte was in the examination of witnesses and the management of juries. John Lawrence, John Rutherford, and John McKesson were among the legal luminaries of the time. Also Jacob Morton, Robert Benson, John Watts, Jr., William Wickham, and Daniel Crommelin Verplanck; the latter was a young man of twenty-five.[1]

His uncle, Gulian Verplanck, third president of the Bank of New York — appointed in 1790 — was a merchant of excellent parts, and a man of many accomplishments; he was one of the early graduates from Columbia College, and received in Holland his mercantile training.[2] His city residence was in Pearl Street, although he subsequently erected a fine mansion in Wall Street.

[1] Daniel Crommelin Verplanck, born in 1762, was twice married. His first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of President William Samuel Johnson of Columbia College, mother of Gulian C. Verplanck, died in 1789, at the age of twenty-four. His second wife was Ann, only daughter of William and Ann De Lancey Walton; their children were Mary Ann, Louisa, Samuel, Elizabeth, William Walton, James De Lancey, and Anna Louisa. His father, Samuel Verplanck, born 1739, died 1820, was first on the list of eight students, the first class graduating from Kings (Columbia) College, in 1758; and being sent to his uncle, Daniel Crommelin, in Holland, for a mercantile education, married, in 1761, his cousin, Judith Crommelin. The father of Samuel was Gulian Verplanck, born 1698, died 1751, the great-grandson of the first of the name in New York; he married Mary, daughter of Charles and Anna Sinclair Crommelin. The Sinclair family descended from the Earls of Orkney, and Lords Sinclair of Scotland. Ann Verplanck, sister of Samuel, married Gabriel Ludlow, and Mary Verplanck, a second sister, married Charles McEvers of New York. Gulian, the youngest brother of Samuel Verplanck, was Speaker of the Assembly in 1791, and in 1796; and from 1790 until his death was one of the Regents of the University of the State of New York. Daniel Crommelin Verplanck was member of Congress from 1802 to 1809, and Judge of Common Pleas in Dutchess County until 1828. A sketch of his son, Gulian C. Verplanck, born 1786, died 1870, a graduate of Columbia College in 1801, will appear upon a future page



Verplanck Arms.

[2] See Vol. I. 741.

Hosted by Google

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1787 - 1790.

NEW YORK CITY THE CAPITAL OF THE NATION.

WALL STREET IN 1787. — DIPLOMATIC ENTERTAINMENTS. — SOCIAL AFFAIRS AT THE CAPITAL. — CLERICAL CHARACTERS. — MEDICAL CELEBRITIES. — THE CITY HOSPITAL. — THE DOCTORS' MOB. — RESIDENCES. — THE TWO POLITICAL PARTIES IN NEW YORK. — ALEXANDER HAMILTON. — THE INSURRECTION IN MASSACHUSETTS. — REPRESENTATIVE MEN OF THE CONVENTION. — THE FEDERAL PRINCIPLE. — FRAMING THE CONSTITUTION. — GOUVERNEUR MORRIS. — THE ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION BY THE STATES. — ACTION OF NEW YORK. — THE FEDERAL CELEBRATION. — NEW YORK CITY. — FEDERAL HALL IN WALL STREET. — THE PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE. — POSTMASTER-GENERAL OSGOOD. — THE ELECTION OF A PRESIDENT. — THE FIRST CONGRESS UNDER THE CONSTITUTION. — ARRIVAL OF WASHINGTON IN NEW YORK CITY. — THE INAUGURATION. — THE FIRST CABINET. — THE INAUGURATION BALL. — THE FESTIVITIES OF THE CAPITAL. — SOCIAL CELEBRITIES. — MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. — PROGRESS OF THE CITY.

THE city received a sudden, strong, healthful, forward impetus in the spring of 1787, through large accessions to its population. Every dwelling-house was occupied. Rents went up, doubling in some instances; fresh paint and new shutters and wings transformed old tenements, and carpenters and masons found ready employment in erecting new structures. The streets were cleaned and pavements mended. New business firms were organized and old warehouses remodeled; the markets were extended and bountifully supplied, and stores blossomed with fashionable goods. Wall Street, the great centre of interest and of fashion, presented a brilliant scene every bright afternoon. Ladies in showy costumes, and gentlemen in silks, satins, and velvet, of many colors, promenaded in front of the City Hall — where Congress was holding its sessions. At the same time Broadway, from St. Paul's Chapel to the Battery, was animated with stylish equipages, filled with pleasure-seekers who never tired of the life-giving, invigorating, perennial sea-breeze, or the unparalleled beauty of the view, stretching off across the varied waters of New York Bay.

The social world was kept in perpetual agitation through distinguished

Hosted by Google

arrivals from various parts of the United States, and from Europe. Dinners and balls were daily occurrences. Secretary and Mrs. Jay entertained with graceful ease, gathering about them all that was most illustrious in statesmanship and letters; they usually gave one ceremonious dinner every week, sometimes two. Their drawing-rooms were also thronged on Thursdays, Mrs. Jay's day "at home"; and evening parties were given at frequent intervals. The manners of Secretary Jay were described by Europeans as affable and unassuming; and his purity and nobility of character impressed the whole world in his favor. He dressed in simple black, wearing his hair slightly powdered and tied in the back. His complexion was without color. His eyes were dark and penetrating, as if the play of thought never ceased, but the general expression of his face was singularly amiable and tranquil. Mrs. Jay was admirably fitted, through her long residence in the Spanish and French capitals, and her own personal and intellectual accomplishments, for the distinguished position of leader of society in the American capital. She dressed richly, and in good taste, and observed the most rigid formalities in her intercourse with the representatives of foreign nations.

Nothing better illustrates the spirit and character of this formative period than the movements in its polite and every-day life. But a mere glimpse must suffice. The infant Republic was interesting, and vastly promising, while it had not yet learned to walk. Its capital was the seat of a floating community composed of the most diverse elements. Curiosity, criticism, and cavil were in the air. The importance attached to the doing of national hospitalities in the Old World, could not be ignored in the New. Entertainments were something more than mere profitless amusements; then, as before and since, they were strong links in the chain which binds nations together.

The Secretary of War and Mrs. Knox lived in a large house and gave munificent banquets. Mrs. Knox was celebrated for her brilliancy in conversation and unfailing good-humor; she had the tact and talent to convert her home into a resort of the intellectual and cultivated, as well as the diplomatic and fashionable. Sir John Temple made it a point to call upon every stranger of note immediately upon his arrival in New York; Lady Temple was the daughter of Governor Bowdoin, of Massachusetts, and, according to the writers of the day, "very distinguished-looking, and agreeable"; she received guests every Tuesday evening, and gave dinners, notable for their costliness, nearly every week to twenty or more guests. Miss Van Berckel assisted her father, the Dutch ambassador, in dispensing hospitalities. Otto, of the French legation, afterwards Comte de Mosloy, married twice in New York, first Miss Livingston

Hosted by Google

in 1782, and, after her death, Miss Crevecœur, in 1790, daughter of the French consul; he is said to have possessed charming social qualities. The Marquis de Moustier arrived in 1787, accompanied by his sister, Madame de Brehan, a clever woman who wrote with spirit and had some skill as an artist, "but with," according to Abigail Adams Smith, "the oddest figure eyes ever beheld." John Armstrong — soldier, statesman, and author — wrote about the same time: "We have a French minister now with us, and if France had wished to destroy the little remembrance that is left of her and her exertions in our behalf, she would have sent just such a man — distant, haughty, penurious, and entirely governed by the caprices of a little, singular, whimsical, hysterical old woman, whose delight is in playing with a negro child and caressing a monkey."

The mother of Chancellor Livingston returned with her family to the city from Clermont, residing at 51 Queen Street — now Pearl — a little above Wall Street. Her daughters were highly bred and educated, well versed in public affairs, and fond of discussing the grave questions of the hour. Her drawing-rooms were the center of attraction for a refined and cultured circle, including many French dignitaries. It was not unusual for articles upon finance, politics, diplomacy, and religion, to be read there by their authors before publication. The younger ladies and some of their more habitual guests often played whist — a game not interdicted by the mistress of the household, but which in deference to her religious tastes was never commenced until she retired from the parlors. John Armstrong married Alida, the youngest daughter of Mrs. Livingston, in 1789. It is related of Mrs. Montgomery, the eldest daughter, that on one occasion, after entertaining a guest of the heavy sort, she expressed relief at his departure with an audible sigh. A bright little niece exclaimed, "Why, aunty, you have not much patience with dull people!" "Ah, no, my dear!" she replied, "I have never been used to them."

Rufus King was described by Brissot de Warville as thirty-three, and passing "for the most eloquent man in the United States," but so modest that "he appeared ignorant of his own worth." His young bride was remarkable for personal beauty — face oval, with a clear, brunette complexion, delicately formed features, expressive blue eyes, black hair, and exquisite teeth; "her motions were all grace, her bearing gracious, her voice musical, and her education exceptional." They resided with her father, John Alsop, near the corner of Maiden Lane and William Street. Colonel William and Lady Kitty Duer had taken up their abode in Broadway, nearly opposite St. Paul's Chapel. The latter, and her sister, Lady Mary Watts, often assisted their cousin, Mrs. Jay, in receiving

Hosted by Google

guests. Kitty Livingston, Mrs. Jay's sister, was married in April of this year to Matthew Ridley, of Baltimore; Susan, the elder sister, having married John Cleve Symmes, a member of Congress, was residing in New York; two younger sisters were also in society, although their home was still at "Liberty Hall," in Elizabeth. The governor, in apologizing to a friend in March for his penmanship, said: "My principal secretary of state, who is one of my daughters, has gone to New York to shake her heels at the balls and assemblages of a metropolis, which might better be more studious of paying its taxes, than of instituting expensive diversions."

General Matthew Clarkson had recently married Mary, the daughter of Walter Rutherford. The young and pretty wife of Richard Varick was the daughter of Isaac and Cornelia Hoffman Roosevelt; and her sister Cornelia had, within a year, married Dr. Benjamin Kissam, the recently appointed Professor of the Institute of Medicine in Columbia College. Mrs. James Beekman presided once more over her beautiful home on the East River, which had so long been occupied by British celebrities.[1] Upon the return of the Beekman family from their seven years' exile, costly treasures in the way of silver and china ware which they buried under the greenhouse before their departure were exhumed uninjured.[2] Two exquisite statuettes in rare old Chelsea, thus preserved in the earth, and numerous pieces of ancestral table-ware — gems of beauty — are in possession of the descendants. Mrs. Beekman had the genius to aid her husband in book-keeping while he was striving to retrieve his impaired fortunes; and she sustained her part in the social kingdom of the capital with distinguished effect.

Nearly all the clerical characters of the period were men of profound learning. They mingled with the youth and beauty of the capital at official dinners and at private parties. Bishop Provost was deeply versed in classical lore, in ecclesiastical history, and in the natural and physical sciences. He conversed with ease and pleasantry, and was ever a welcome guest, as was also Mrs. Provost.[3] Governor George Clinton occupied the mansion of Henry White, in Pearl Street, property sold under the confiscation act in 1786; the same year Mr. White died in Golden Square, London. His widow, Eve Van Cortlandt White, resided with her

[1] See sketch of Beekman mansion, Vol. I. 569; Mrs. Beekman, I. 759, II. 188.

[2] This greenhouse was the first upon Manhattan Island. Lemon-trees bore fruit underneath its roof of glass before the war; in the summer of 1776 Washington and his staff were treated to lemonade made from lemons picked from the trees in their presence.

[3] Rev. Samuel Provost, Bishop of New York from 1786 to 1801, consecrated at Lambeth, England, was the son of John Provost and Eve, daughter of Harmanus Rutgers, and grandson of Samuel Provost and Maria Sprat, granddaughter of the first De Peyster in New York. He was born March 11, 1742, and died September 6, 1815. — *Haldane's Ms. Gen. Coll.*

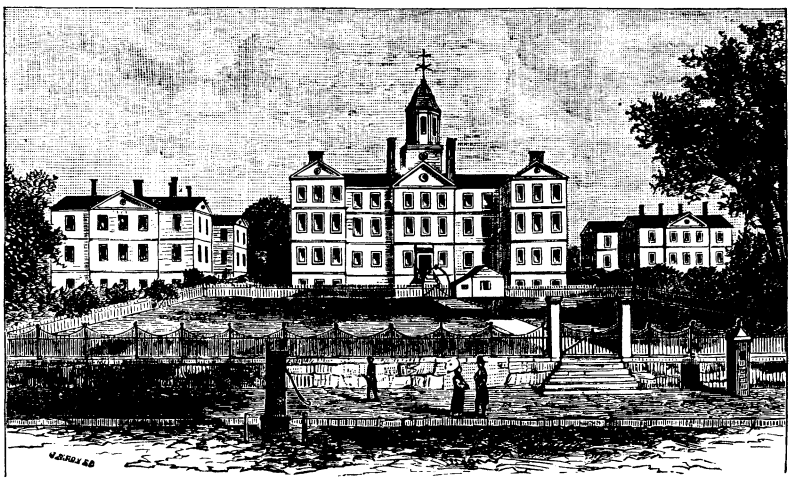
Hosted by Google

daughters, conspicuous belles in New York society, at 11 Broadway, the homestead inherited from her father, until her death in 1836. She was a lady of great wealth. The Bayards and the Ludlows remained in the city; also many other loyalist families. The Misses Bayard were among the New York social beauties mentioned by a French writer.

Dr. John Charlton, an English surgeon who had been much at the court of George III., coming to New York with the British army, married Mary De Peyster, daughter of Treasurer Abraham and Margaret Van Cortlandt De Peyster, and settled in the city; he was a short, stout man of florid complexion, fond of riding on horseback, and practised medicine principally among his family connections. The oldest and most eminent physician of the time was Dr. John Bard, one of the founders of the New York Hospital. He was seventy-three, a Huguenot by descent, and noted for his skill and learning scarcely less than for his extreme urbanity of manner. He usually wore a red coat and a cocked hat, and carried a gold-headed cane; he drove about the city in a low pony phaeton, accompanied by a faithful negro almost as venerable as himself. Frank Van Berckel, the son of the Dutch Minister, drove in a high phaeton, and a caricature print was issued representing the aged doctor in his little vehicle, passing under the body and between the wheels of the gay young Dutchman's elevated equipage without touching. It is said no one relished the humor of the illustration more than Dr. Bard himself. In 1788 he became the first president of the New York Medical Society. His son, Dr. Samuel Bard, who studied medicine in Edinburgh, and married his cousin, Mary Bard, organized the first medical school in connection with Kings College, and took the chair of physic in 1769, subsequently becoming dean of the faculty. He succeeded to his father's practice, and when Washington was inaugurated President, became his family physician; and he attained greater eminence than any of his predecessors. Dr. John Cochrane stood next to Dr. Bard in seniority, having achieved so high a reputation during the war that he enjoyed a wide patronage among the citizens of New York City. His home in Broadway was the hospitable centre of a large circle of Schuyler and Livingston relatives, and it was where the prominent generals of the army were entertained in the most princely manner. Dr. Thomas Jones, a man of fortune who had married a Livingston, was perhaps more eminent as a politician than physician, but in either field was distinguished as a scholar and a gentleman. He was a brother of Dr. John Jones of Philadelphia. Dr. Kissam and Dr. McKnight both held professorships in the college, as before mentioned; the latter was the best surgeon of his day, besides having an extensive family practice.

Hosted by Google

The City Hospital, between Duane and Anthony Streets, upon the west side of Broadway, which had been projected before the war, and the edifice completed in time to be converted into a barrack for the reception of troops in 1776, stood unrepaired, and unused for the purposes of a hospital, until January 3, 1791, when it was opened for the admission of eighteen patients, and began its great work. The accompanying sketch illustrates its appearance about the beginning of the present century. The Society of Governors, established in 1771, meanwhile, simply preserved its corporate existence by holding annual elections; in the summer of 1785, some destitute Scotch emigrants were allowed to use the vacant building as a place of shelter for a few weeks; the following winter Dr. Richard Bailey obtained permission to occupy one or two rooms



The City Hospital.
[From a rare old print, never before reproduced.]

for anatomical lectures. Subsequently the legislature of the State were allowed to fit up some rooms for their accommodation during a particular session. The next year Dr. Bailey operated upon a patient in one of the rooms he had used for his lectures, and finding him unfit to be removed, was allowed to attend him there until he recovered.

Suddenly the doctors and their anatomies came to grief. The public mind had been startled during the winter by rumors that dead bodies had been stolen by the medical students from the different cemeteries of the city. On Sunday morning, April 13, 1788, some meddling boys playing about the building were impelled to climb a ladder, which had been left resting against one of the walls by a workman the day before, and peeped through the window to see what was going on within. A

Hosted by Google

young surgeon, busy upon a subject in the dissecting-room, greeted the foremost inquisitive youngster with the flourish of an arm — not his own — and the boy fled with the news to his father, a mason, who repeated the story to his comrades, and, seizing such tools of their trade as would best serve them as weapons, they started in a body for the hospital. Their force increased as they advanced, and the whole city was in a wild tumult. The hospital was surrounded, the doors burst in, several subjects were discovered, and a collection of anatomical specimens destroyed. The doctors took refuge in the jail, where they were with difficulty protected by the hastily summoned militia. The mob swore vengeance upon all the doctors of the city, and started for the house of Dr. Cochrane, which they ransacked from cellar to garret in search of subjects. They omitted to open the scuttle and look out upon the roof, or they would have discovered Dr. Hicks, of whom they were in hot pursuit, snugly hiding behind the chimney. In the height of the frenzy they passed the house of Sir John Temple, and mistaking the name of Sir John for "surgeon," attacked it furiously, and were just barely restrained from leveling it with the ground.

As night approached the ranks of the rioters were thinned, and it was hoped the trouble had ended. But small bands patrolled the streets, and in the morning the mob was greater than ever, having been joined by sailors from vessels in the harbor; and it proceeded at once to storm the jail, breaking the windows, tearing down the fences, and threatening to drag the doctors out and hang them. Governor Clinton, Mayor Duane, Secretary Jay, Baron Steuben, Hamilton, and other prominent citizens endeavored to appease the popular fury, but in vain. Jay, in driving to the scene, was severely wounded in the head from a stone thrown through the glass of his chariot. The mayor hesitated to give the order to fire upon the mob; Baron Steuben, in the benevolence of his heart, was remonstrating with the governor against attempting to quell the riot with fire-arms, when he was hit in the forehead with a brick-bat, and fell bleeding to the pavement, crying loudly, "Fire, governor, fire!" The soldiers did fire, and five persons were killed and seven or eight badly wounded; upon which the crowd fled. Steuben was carried to Duer's house, and there being no surgeon at hand, and none daring to show themselves, Lady Kitty stanched his wound and bound up his head.

The site of the hospital was a five-acre lot purchased from the Rutgers estate. The marshes in the region of Chatham Square caused so much fever and ague, that it is said Rutgers at one time prayed the king for a better title to his property, that he might sell it to somebody willing to make drains, "because the inhabitants lost one third of their time by

Hosted by Google

sickness." There were but few houses as yet above that of William Axtell, which, being sold under the confiscation act about this time, became the residence of Lewis Allaire Scott, son of John Morin Scott, who was secretary of the state of New York for a considerable period.[1] Near Hanover Square were several fine old mansions; that of Gerard W. Beekman had been occupied in 1782 by Admiral Digby, who entertained Prince William Henry, afterwards William IV. of England. Andrew Hamersley's residence was nearly opposite, all the appointments of which were in a style of costly elegance. The homes of the Gouverneurs, the Hoffmans, the Van Hornes, and the Clarksons were in that immediate vicinity. Gerardus Duyckinck, proprietor of the "Universal Store" whose advertisements and display of wares were the most curious and unique of the period, lived on Pearl Street; he married the daughter of Dr. Henry Livingston. Samuel Hake, claimant to the title of Lord Hake, a wealthy importer who had remained in New York during the war, built a house a little out of the city, on the Bowery Road; his wife was the daughter of Robert Gilbert Livingston, and their daughter married Frederic, eldest son of James and Sarah Reade De Peyster. General John Lamb established his residence in Wall Street when he returned from the wars. Shortly after his election to the Assembly he was appointed Collector of the Port, the emoluments of which office, together with the results of investing his depreciated debt certificates in forfeited lands, as a speculation, rendered him comfortably opulent. He was of a kind, benevolent nature, and opened his doors hospitably to every soldier of the Revolution, whatever his rank. But no acts or arguments could modify his inflexible antipathy to the loyalists. He blamed them indiscriminately for the course they had taken in the Revolution, and said they deserved punishment. He was as positive as he was honest in his convictions; but reasoning from arbitrary premises he followed rigidly a single line of thought, like a railway in its grooves, and fearful of the revival of aristocratic influences, became the determined opposer of every movement towards the union of the States in empire under a specific constitution.

Foremost on this plane stood Governor George Clinton, whose long and faithful services at the helm of affairs had given him a strong hold upon the affections of the people of New York. He had made his mark,

[1] See page 207 (Vol. II.) for sketch of the Rutherford and Axtell houses, upon the corner of Vesey Street, where the Astor House now stands, which together formed a uniform building of brick. Mrs. Axtell was a beautiful woman, the sister of James De Peyster, and of Mrs. Dr. Charlton and Mrs. Clarkson; her portrait, by Copley, is preserved in the De Peyster family of the present generation.

Hosted by Google

and his clear, logical brain and great decision of character inspired confidence in his political judgment; he possessed, moreover, the power of distributing the patronage of the government. He was ably supported by John Lansing, Robert Yates, Melancthon Smith, and other men of importance, and the State rights party thus represented was largely in the majority.

Meanwhile General Philip Schuyler, with magnanimity similar to that which characterized his treatment of the conquered Burgoyne in 1777, was striving for the restoration of the loyalists to full citizenship. Hamilton was his son-in-law, and, having recently acquired special influence through the operations of the bank established under his auspices, was elected, in spite of the strength and magnitude of the opposition, to the Assembly of 1787. He at once attacked the vexed subject of the continued exclusion of the loyalists from participation in the elections, and with such bold strokes — lessons which touch the American heart more deeply than the most stirring memories of Greece and Rome — that on the last day of January he secured the passage of a bill repealing the disfranchising act, which, aided by the efforts of Schuyler, was carried through the Senate on the 3d of February. But an attempt to surrender the control of the imposts to Congress was a total failure. New York was conscious of her prospective importance, and resisted every encroachment upon her sovereignty. Jealousy of the national scheme took possession of the New York soul, and fear of an elective despotism sharpened her sagacious vision. In connection with Schuyler and Hamilton the leading spirits who looked beyond the special interests of the State to a more positive union on some definite grounds were Secretary Jay, Chancellor Livingston, and the Van Rensselears. They spent the month of February in striving for the assent of the Legislature to the appointment of delegates to the Convention. This bill was carried March 6, notwithstanding the Federal party was in what seemed a hopeless minority. But of the three delegates chosen, John Lansing and Robert Yates were notably of the governor's mind, and although Hamilton was the third choice, the anti-Federalists thought they could safely trust the interests of New York to a delegation of which the majority were in favor of preserving her individual powers, and whose action was confined specifically by a legislative resolution to the business of amending the Articles of Confederation, instead of creating a new Constitution.

New York little dreamed that the boldness, energy, acute sense, and well-balanced intellect of the youthful Hamilton was to overbear by eloquence, interpret essential needs by illustration, usurp powers with imperious will, and then convince by argument a large proportion of her

Hosted by Google

population that he was in the right, and finally compel a public recognition and justification of the wisdom of his conduct. But such were the facts, as the reader will soon learn. The whole story reads like fiction.

The character and genius of Hamilton furnish a never-failing source of food for captivating study.[1] He was not yet thirty, and almost as boyish-looking as when he was the confidential companion of Washington. There was, perhaps, more gravity resting upon his expressive countenance at times, but intelligent vivacity predominated. He was frank, amiable, and high-bred, and attracted his friends irresistibly; while his enemies both hated and stood in awe of him. He had a mind of immense grasp, and could endure more unremitted and intense labor than any other man in New York. His thought flashed forth like a calcium light, illuminating the broad scene, and placing him in the front rank of artists in government-making. He had been ripening for his work through patient attention to facts and a grand generalization of their subtle principles, until he could see into consequences yet dormant in ideas. His growth in the science of practical statesmanship had been pushed to its full stature by the forces of that remarkable age; and his versatility and creative gifts had been sharpened by the peculiar social and political conditions of the community in which his lot was cast. He was never fully up to the tide of popular sympathy in all things, or responsive to its

[1] The following letter, never before published, written by Hamilton to Miss Schuyler three weeks before their marriage — dated October 13, 1780 — will be read with interest by every student of Hamilton's career. The original copy is treasured by one of the family, through whose courtesy the author has been permitted to make this copy: —

"I would not have you imagine Miss that I write to you so often either to gratify your wishes or to please your vanity; but merely to indulge myself and to comply with that restless propensity of my mind, which will not allow me to be happy when I am not doing something in which you are concerned. This may seem a very idle disposition in a philosopher and a soldier; but I can plead illustrious examples in my justification. Achilles had like to have sacrificed Greece and his glory to his passion for a female captive; and Anthony lost the world for a woman. I am sorry the times are so changed as to oblige me to summon antiquity for my apology, but I confess, to the disgrace of the present age, that I have not been able to find many who are as far gone as myself in such laudable zeal for the fair sex. I suspect, however, if others knew the charms of my sweetheart as well as I do, I should have a great number of competitors — I wish I could give you an idea of her — you have no conception how sweet a girl she is — it is only in my heart that her image is truly drawn. She has a lovely form and a mind still more lovely; she is all goodness, the gentlest, the dearest, the tenderest of her sex — Ah, Betsey, how I love her!

"Two days since, I wrote to you my dear girl and sent the letter to the care of Colonel Morris: there was with it a bundle to your mamma, directed to your father, containing a cloak which Miss Livingston sent to my care. I enclosed you in that letter, the copy of a long one to my friend Laurens with an account of Arnold's affair. I mention this for fear of a miscarriage as usual.

"Well, my love, here is the middle of October; a few weeks more and you are mine; a

Hosted by Google

pulse-beat; but he could give more point to a discussion than any one of his contemporaries, and he was unsurpassed in the electricity of his make.

The Convention assembled at Philadelphia in May. Congress had regarded the movement with coldness, questioning its constitutionality until aroused by the alarming condition of affairs in Massachusetts. A riotous insurrection, caused by public and private debts, scarcity of money, and decline of trade during the autumn of 1786 and winter following, threatened the whole country with anarchy and ruin. The people, imbued with wild notions of liberty, headed by Daniel Shays, resisted the payment of obligations and taxes, and obliged the courts of law to adjourn. The rebellion extended into New Hampshire, where the legislature convened at Exeter was besieged, and imprisoned for several hours, the object of the insurgents being to force an issue of paper money agreeably to a petition signed by thirty towns which had not been granted. "I am mortified beyond expression," wrote Washington to Henry Lee in Congress, "at such a melancholy verification of what our transatlantic foes have predicted, and of another thing more to be regretted, that mankind when left to themselves are unfit for their own government." This pressure for reform in the general governing system was finally made effective through the action of the New York Legislature,

1787. May.

sweet reflection to me — is it so to my charmer? Do you find yourself more or less anxious for the moment to arrive as it approaches? This is a good criterion to determine the degree of your affection by. You have had an age for consideration, time enough for even a woman to know her mind in. Do you begin to repent or not? Remember you are going to do a very serious thing. For though our sex have generously given up a part of its prerogatives, and husbands have no longer the power of life and death, as the wiser husbands of former days had, yet we still retain the power of happiness and misery; and if you are prudent you will not trust the felicity of your future life to one in whom you have not good reason for implicit confidence. I give you warning — don't blame me if you make an injudicious choice — and if you should be disposed to retract, don't give me the trouble of a journey to Albany, and then do as did a certain lady I have mentioned to you, find out the day before we are to be married that you 'can't like the man'; but of all things I pray you don't make the discovery afterwards — for this would be worse than all. But I do not apprehend its being the case. I think we know each other well enough to understand each other's feelings, and to be sure our affection will not only last but be progressive.

"I stopped to read over my letter — it is a motley mixture of fond extravagance and sprightly dullness; the truth is I am too much in love to be either reasonable or witty; I feel in the extreme; and when I attempt to speak of my feelings I rave. I have remarked to you before that real tenderness has always a tincture of sadness, and when I affect the lively my melting heart rebels. It is separated from you and it cannot be cheerful. Love is a sort of insanity and every thing I write savors strongly of it; that you return it is the best proof of your madness also.

"I tell you, my Betsey, you are negligent; you do not write to me often enough. Take more care of my happiness, for there is nothing your Hamilton would not do to promote yours."

Hosted by Google

which instructed her delegates in Congress to move for an act to sanction a revision or change; thus Congress advised the States to confer power upon a convention, which should comprehend the highest civil talent of the country — representing every interest, and every part of the Union.

The members numbered fifty-five. Washington, the heart and hand of America, towards whom all eyes turned in dire emergencies, came from Mount Vernon, and, with his usual punctilious observance of etiquette, paid an immediate visit to the President of Pennsylvania, Dr. Franklin. The philosopher was in his eighty-second year, but his health had improved since his return from France, and he attended the Convention regularly, five hours a day, for more than four months. Robert Morris, whose personal credit had proved such a valuable element in securing independence, George Read, a signer of the Declaration, Edmund Randolph, the governor of Virginia, and Gouverneur Morris, who had resided in Philadelphia since the termination of his service as Assistant Financier, were conspicuous delegates. New Jersey sent Governor William Livingston, one of the most forcible and elegant writers, and probably the best classical scholar in the assemblage. The reader has known him best as a soldier and a statesmen, but he had great tact and talent as an essayist, his satirical powers were unrivaled, he was a poet of no mean ability, and his literary taste was singularly refined for the day.

From New Hampshire came John Langdon, subsequently governor of that State, a severely practical republican of social habits and magnetic and pleasing address, the patriot who furnished means to equip Stark's New Hampshire militia in the dark days prior to the victory of Bennington, pledging his plate among other valuables for the purpose. From South Carolina came a polished and accomplished delegation: John Rutledge, who, like his brother Edward, had received legal training at the Temple, and was versed in all the intricacies of the English law; and the two Pinckneys, Charles Cotesworth and Charles — the latter, afterwards governor of South Carolina, a dozen or more years younger than the former — both of whom were educated for the bar, the elder of the two at Westminster, Oxford, and the Temple, and had since passed through every vicissitude of a soldier's life. From Massachusetts came a fine specimen of the old Puritan character, Caleb Strong, born in Northampton thirty years before the breaking out of the Revolution, a student of law, of spotless private character, a statesman of inflexible adherence to principle, who while governor of Massachusetts during the War of 1812 denied the right of the President, upon constitutional grounds, to make requisition upon the State for troops; he affected no elegance of style, was tall, with a somewhat long visage, his hair but slightly powdered,

Hosted by Google

resting loosely upon a high, thoughtful brow, from beneath which eyes of singular beauty beamed with gentleness and kindness. Elbridge Gerry was forty-three, one year the senior of Strong, a master in all questions of commerce and finance, a gentleman small and slight of stature, and of extreme urbanity of manner. Rufus King was also sent by Massachusetts, and his vigorous oratory, and rare combination of personal and intellectual endowments, made him a prominent figure. Rhode Island was not represented. Connecticut sent three of her brightest and best men, William Samuel Johnson, Roger Sherman, and Oliver Ellsworth. Johnson was not only a jurist, but a man of broad intelligence, science, and literature. He had resided five years before the war in England as agent of Connecticut, and was on intimate terms with the celebrated Dr. Samuel Johnson, as well as a privileged guest in the cultivated circle of which that literary colossus was the acknowledged chief. Sherman, according to Jefferson, "never said a foolish thing in his life." He was forty-six, tall, erect, well-proportioned, of fair complexion and manly bearing, habitually calm, grave, self-poised, and possessed of much practical wisdom, and a knowledge of human nature that seemed intuitive. He was really one of the most remarkable men present. He was the son of a New England farmer, obtained the rudiments of education in a common school, and worked at the shoemaker's trade, with his books around him, while preparing himself for the stern realities of a useful life. He hardly ever had known an idle hour. He had already been, for some years, a judge of the highest court in Connecticut. Ellsworth was also a lawyer, and afterwards chief justice. He was forty-two, an independent thinker and an eloquent speaker, an unassuming, consistent republican, who combined all the charms of good-breeding with the excellences of the Christian gentleman.

Georgia and North Carolina were not behind the other States in contributing merit to this august body. Georgia's most notable delegate was a son of her adoption, Abraham Baldwin, a young Connecticut lawyer of thirty-three, a graduate of Yale, the brother-in-law of Joel Barlow, who at the request of General Greene removed to Savannah in 1784. North Carolina sent William Richardson Davie, by birth an Englishman, a graduate from Princeton, and commissary-general of the Southern army under Greene. He was but thirty-one, remarkably handsome, of commanding physique, voice of peculiar melody, and an accomplished orator. He was subsequently governor of North Carolina. Hugh Williamson was fifty, and his reputation for integrity such that no one dared to approach him with flattery or falsehood. He was a thorough scholar in divinity, excelled in mathematics, had studied medicine at

Hosted by Google

Edinburgh and Utrecht, and was a writer upon a great variety of abstruse topics. Virginia's delegation was renowned. The central figure was Washington. George Wythe, Chancellor of Virginia for more than twenty years, was sixty-one, and as exceptionally wise and pure-minded as he was venerable. He, like Sherman, was the son of a farmer, although educated chiefly by his mother, a remarkable classical scholar; but he had taught himself Greek, and become thoroughly learned in jurisprudence. His pupil, James Madison, of whom Virginia was justly proud, stood by his side, a fair-faced man of thirty-seven. Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania together supplied eighteen delegates. Luther Martin, of Maryland, was a lawyer of commanding intellect, afterwards the personal and political friend of Aaron Burr, whose acquittal he was instrumental in procuring when tried for treason in 1807; one of his colleagues, John Francis Mercer, afterwards governor of Maryland, had been a soldier and a citizen of deserved distinction in his own State; John Dickinson, son of Judge Samuel Dickinson, had just reached his fifty-fifth year, a man of elegant learning and fine conversational powers, who, trained in law at the Temple, had displayed unusual gifts, not only at the bar, but in legislation and authorship. George Clymer, of Pennsylvania, was forty-eight, of medium size, fair complexion, and features radiant with intelligence and benevolence; he rarely made a speech, through extreme diffidence, but wrote with exceeding care and accuracy, and his opinions were always received with marked respect; it is said that he was never heard to speak ill of the absent or known to break a promise, and was always on the alert to promote every scheme for the improvement of the country in science, agriculture, polite learning, the fine arts, or objects of mere utility. James Wilson, born in Scotland, had studied successively at Glasgow, St. Andrews, and Edinburgh, and finally completed his legal education in the office of John Dickinson, of Delaware, who was ten years his senior. He was a clear, sagacious, forcible political writer, and a statesman of high order. The soldier, Thomas Mifflin, was one of the immortal company; also Jared Ingersoll, whose father, Jared Ingersoll, was the stamp-master of Connecticut, captured and conducted to Hartford in 1765, and forced by the indignant people to resign his office, as related in a former chapter. The son went to London and studied law five years in the Middle Temple, and then returned to reside in Philadelphia, where he became a prominent jurist, holding many offices of trust in the courts and councils of the country.

There was scarcely a man in the Convention who was not a specimen of strong individuality, of commanding will, of manly statesmanship, and of gentlemanly culture; and nearly all had acquired political wisdom and

Hosted by Google

achieved eminence in some field of public service. It was a body of earnest thinkers, to whom had been confided in a larger degree than ever to any other body of men the destinies of nations. It organized with Washington as its presiding officer, bound itself to secrecy, and proceeded to its work with closed doors; it was soon found impossible to amend the existing Articles of Confederation, and various were the resolutions submitted as the basis of a new constitution. Franklin opposed every proposition that tended towards an arbitrary government. He thought the chief magistrate should have no salary and little power, and that the government should be a simple contrivance for executing the will of the people. He said that ambition and avarice, the love of power and the love of money, were the two passions that most influenced the affairs of men, and argued that the struggle for posts of honor which were at the same time places of profit would perpetually divide the nation and distract its councils; and that the men who would thrust themselves into the arena of contention for preferment would not be the wise and moderate, those fitted for high trusts, but the bold, the selfish, and the violent, and that in the bustle of cabal, and the mutual abuse of parties, the best of characters would be torn in pieces.

Hamilton went to the other extreme. He did not favor a monarchy, but he was for having a perpetual senate and a perpetual governor. His peculiarly constructive ideas were toned, however, by a chivalrous generosity, and an unerring perception of the practicable and the expedient. The work before the Convention was of a nature to develop, to the fullest extent, the most conflicting opinions and the most opposite theories. No subject in the whole range of human thought and human endeavor could be more complex. The prevailing fear of a close corporation with despotic powers, obstructed the development of the great Federal principle which Hamilton had long cherished, and first defined in the midst of the gloom and uncertainty of the civil contest — a principle which acknowledged the inalienable right of the individual state to control absolutely its own domestic and internal affairs, because better able to do it intelligently than any outside power, but which also recognized the desirability and necessity of a central government, that should settle and determine national questions. To embody such a scheme, with all its delicate details, in a written document, required serious, searching, conscientious, and discriminating examination and deliberation. No aid of special significance could be gleaned from history, as the world had then seen little of real liberty united with personal safety and public security.

And this novel undertaking, unknown to the science of politics, was to be tried in a new land, under new social conditions, and it is no matter of wonder that it should have been regarded as a prodigious experiment.

Hosted by Google

All summer the toil went on. In the early part of July Hamilton's associate New York delegates, Yates and Lansing, returned home, because they thought the Convention was transcending its powers. Hamilton, left alone to represent the great Empire State, brought his marvelous gifts and best energies to the task. He had less direct agency than some others in framing the chief provisions of the Constitution, but he was the main engineer of the structure. Never untimely obtrusive with his clear-cut opinions, or hesitant when discussion was appropriate, he brought his profound knowledge of the practical workings of all the political systems of the world into grand review, and with deferential, courteous, and yet authoritative air, and singularly fascinating manners, commanded the ear of the Convention whenever he lifted his voice.

The facts and philosophy of the situation invest the slight figure which towered so high in the midst of the assembled greatness with new light and life. Hamilton's bright, vivacious countenance illumined every dark point of the troublesome and often misfitting framework. He was essentially the guide of the builders. Curtis says he evinced "a more remarkable maturity than has ever been exhibited by any other person, at so early an age, in the same department of thought"; and, furthermore, that Hamilton "proved himself to be a statesman of greater talent and power than the celebrated Pitt, two years his junior, who became Prime Minister of England at the age of twenty-four; for none can doubt, that to build up a free and firm State out of a condition of political chaos, and to give it a government capable of developing the resources of its soil and people, and of insuring to it prosperity, power, and permanence, is a greater work than to administer with energy and success — even in periods of severe trial — the constitution of an empire whose principles and modes of action have been settled for centuries." Hamilton was the youngest man in this remarkable body, which for moral completeness of character and breadth of intellectual vision never has been excelled in this or any other country; and he stood opposed to Franklin, the oldest man present — upwards of fifty years his senior — whose fame filled the eastern as well as the western hemisphere.

But although Franklin occasionally pushed his peculiar fancies to the utmost verge of truth through excess of worldly wisdom, he rose grandly above all fanaticism or intolerance, and his prudent influence was one of the great elements that ruled the hour. The next day after Hamilton was deserted by his New York colleagues, Franklin delivered a speech in which he attributed the "small progress made in four or five weeks' continual reasoning with each other without results, to the melancholy imperfection of the human understanding," and urgently recommended that the sessions be opened every morning with prayer.

Hosted by Google

Washington's serene and commanding presence was of vital consequence at this important crisis of human affairs — without which Hamilton's extraordinary forecast and luminous discussions would have availed little. Madison's accurate and clear logic and Rufus King's brilliant efforts were also of the first importance. Madison, in addition to his manifold duties during the session, preserved a full and careful record of the discussions with his own hand; King was the author of a prohibition of the States to pass laws affecting the obligations of contracts, which was incorporated in the phraseology of the instrument on the 14th of September. The ardent and impulsive Gouverneur Morris, with flashing eloquence, discarded all narrow notions for the welfare of the whole continent, and contributed largely towards attaining the objects of the Convention. Several of the statesmen, in a spirit of comprehensive magnanimity, yielded points, for the general good, which they had held with great tenacity. Hamilton himself, with rare felicity of temperament, accepted in the end certain features which he thought defective, believing it to be the best government that the wisdom of the Convention could frame, and the best that the nation would adopt.



Gouverneur Morris.
[From a painting by Ames, in possession of the New York Historical Society.]
[Presented by Stephen van Rensselaer, in 1817.]

A committee was appointed on the 8th of September, consisting of Hamilton, Madison, William Samuel Johnson, Rufus King, and Gouverneur Morris, to revise the style and arrange the articles of the draft of a constitution, which had been under debate since the early part of August, and at last substantially agreed upon by its framers. This finishing work was delegated to Gouverneur Morris, whose facile pen and fine literary taste clothed the instrument in clear, simple, and expressive

Sept. 8.

Hosted by Google

language, giving to the substance its admirable order and symmetry, and to the text its distinguishing elegance.

The revised draft having been reported and engrossed, it was duly signed by a majority of the members, and submitted to the States
Sept. 17. for ratification; after which the Convention adjourned.

When Hamilton returned home, he found that the anti-Federalists as a whole, and a large proportion of his own constituents, accredited him with having perpetrated the worst of mischiefs in signing the Constitution in behalf of New York. "You were not authorized by the State," said Governor Clinton. "You will find yourself, I fear, in a hornet's nest," said Chief Justice Richard Morris. Washington's official letter
Sept. 28. reached Congress on the 28th, containing a draft of the Constitution, which, in accordance with a unanimous resolution of that body, was transmitted to the several State legislatures, in order to be submitted for approval to a Convention to be called in each State for the purpose — the assent of nine of the thirteen States being required for its ratification. The publication of the instrument in New York opened a spirited and violent contest. Not only the city but the whole State was in a ferment. It was not possible for the same principle of concession and mutual forbearance, and the same breadth of understanding, to prevail among the masses as among their enlightened representatives in the Convention. All manner of prejudices were awakened, State pride, State interests, and State jealousies were aroused, suspicions and terrors were created, and hostile legions sincerely believed that the terrible Constitution would be the grave of American liberty.

From Georgia to New Hampshire a formidable proportion of the people rallied with great enthusiasm and vigor for the defense of State rights. The new Constitution proposed a voluntary surrender of political power from one class of men to another. It had been constructed by a Convention authorized solely to amend the old system. Brilliant orators in every State along the whole Atlantic seaboard predicted arbitrary despotism, and called attention to the fact that the Convention had exceeded its powers. As a natural consequence, inflammatory resentment spread with fearful rapidity. The eloquent Patrick Henry lent all his persuasive gifts to the great work of preventing the adoption of the Constitution. He said: "When I come to examine its features, they appear to me horribly frightful. Among other deformities, it has an awful squinting; it squints towards monarchy; and does not this raise indignation in the breast of every true American? Your president may easily become king. Your senate is so imperfectly constructed, that your dearest rights may be sacrificed. Where are your checks in this government?"

Hosted by Google

In New York the anti-Federalists, calling themselves Federal Republicans, organized for determined opposition. A society, formed in the city, of which General John Lamb was chairman, and his son-in-law, Charles Tillinghast, secretary, opened a correspondence with the chief men holding similar views in other States, to concert measures to prevent the adoption of the Constitution. On the other hand, Hamilton commenced writing a series of essays, which, published in the New York newspapers, were copied far and wide into nearly all the journals of America. He addressed himself to the reason and good sense of the people at large, explaining his position and clearly elucidating his principles of public policy. Associated with him in this educating process were Secretary Jay and James Madison. In simple, forcible diction they pointed out the advantages of an energetic government, and gradually overcame the ill-grounded apprehensions of the multitude. They had faith in the intelligence and honesty of the community whenever it should attain to a better knowledge of the ample provisions for the maintenance of the rights and interests of all classes of citizens and State organizations, made by the instrument under consideration. These papers commanded careful attention, and carried conviction to the great body of thinking men in all parts of the country; they were published in two small volumes during the year 1788, entitled *The Federalist*, the first volume being issued before the final essays were written, the second following as soon as the series was completed. This work is preserved, and justly prized as an exhaustive reply to the many objections raised against the Constitution, and as the most important source of contemporaneous interpretation which the annals of America afford. 1788.

In the conventions called by the States the best talent was engaged, and opposing views were advocated with a fullness, force, and earnestness never surpassed on any occasion in American history. The parties were so evenly balanced, in some instances, that it was impossible to conjecture what would be the fate of the Constitution; and the small majorities show how reluctantly the new government was accepted. Debts and outside dangers moved several of the States to prompt action. An exciting month was spent in debate by the Convention of Massachusetts. "The State government," said Fisher Ames, "is a beautiful structure, but it is situated on the naked beach. What security has it against foreign enemies? Can we protect our fisheries or secure by treaties a sale for the produce of our lands in foreign markets?" The eminent men of Virginia were not assembled in convention until June. Patrick Henry wrote on the 9th to General Lamb, "I am satisfied four fifths of our inhabitants are opposed to the new scheme of government, Jan.

Hosted by Google

and yet, strange as it may seem, the numbers in convention appear equal on both sides; the friends and seekers of power have, with their usual subtilty, wriggled themselves into the choice of the people by assuming shapes as various as the faces of the men they address on such occasions." The brilliant Virginian resisted the Constitution to the last. When likely to be overpowered he expressed his sentiments in manly terms: "I will be a peaceable citizen! My head, my hand, my heart, shall be at liberty to retrieve the loss of liberty and remove the defects of the system in a constitutional way."

Meanwhile New York was agitated from centre to circumference with acrimonious disputation. The two parties vilified each other in pamphlets, in the newspapers, in conversation on the streets, and in social and business circles. Hamilton, meeting General Lamb one morning, expostulated with him upon the folly of his fears respecting "the abuse of power," saying, "It is a matter of certainty that Washington will be the first President." Admitting that unlimited power might safely be trusted to that great man, Lamb added that he knew of no other mortal to whom he would be willing to confide the enormous authority granted by the Constitution, and that not even the influence of a name so illustrious could shake his opposition to the dangerous instrument. But when nine States had signified their approval and the government was sure to go into operation, it was plain that New York must do one of two things — unite with the others or secede. A resolution for the call of a State Convention, offered by Egbert Benson in January, passed both branches of the legislature after some delay, and the delegates were accordingly elected. The capital was represented by Hamilton, Secretary Jay, Chancellor Livingston, Chief Justice Richard Morris, and Mayor Duane. The delegation from Albany were anti-Federalists. The members altogether numbered sixty-seven, embracing a very large proportion of the men of talent and prominence then on the political stage, of whom a decided majority were opposed to the Constitution. This New York Convention assembled at Poughkeepsie on the 17th of June, and organized with Governor George Clinton President.

June 17.

Chancellor Livingston opened the discussion on the 19th, pointing out the absolute necessity of the Union to New York, especially on account of her peculiar local situation and the consequent confusion of her commercial relations, and in the most eloquent terms urged the magnitude and importance of the question at issue, and the duty of the gentlemen to divest themselves of every preconceived prejudice in order to deliberate with coolness, moderation, and candor. The anti-Federalists argued that New York would, in accepting the Constitution, sacrifice too much polit-

Hosted by Google

ical consequence and too great a proportion of the natural advantages accruing from her commanding geographical position.

July came, and still the various clauses of the Constitution were hotly discussed. News from Virginia on the 3d saddened the opposition. In Albany the Federalists were jubilant, and celebrated the July 3. event by a procession conducted with much pomp and ceremony. The anti-Federalists, angered by the display, gathered themselves together, and after listening to inflammatory speeches burned the Constitution in the faces of their foes. Both parties then attempted to march through the same street, and a serious scrimmage ensued in which several persons were wounded. The news of the accession of New Hampshire followed swiftly that of Virginia. The Convention was in the very depths of troubled waters. Jay's continuity of mental effort and aptitude for harmonizing differences and smoothing down rough places were of the utmost use in the emergency. But the most remarkable speech of the session was that of Hamilton, when the delegates assembled for the final vote. He addressed them for three hours, bringing forward every argument, and dwelling with matchless skill upon the miseries that must ensue if the Constitution was rejected. Some of his audience were melted into tears; Kent, who was present, said "he never could have believed the power of man equal to so much eloquence." Gilbert Livingston, one of the opposition, rose, and solemnly remarked "that there was much truth in Mr. Hamilton's words." The sagacious Clinton at the last was believed to have privately advised Melancthon Smith to vote with the Federalists. The momentous decision took place on Thursday, the 26th of July, New York adopting the Constitution by a majority July 26. of three — with the recommendation of several proposed amendments. Thus turned the pivot in the history of the English-speaking race.

The metropolis had grown restless while waiting for the action of the Convention, and on Monday, three days before the great event just recorded, proceeded to carry out the plan of an imposing celebra- July 23. tion, matured by a committee, and arranged under the special supervision of Major L'Enfant. It was thought that an exhibition of the popular feeling would materially influence the obstinate body at Poughkeepsie, and bring matters to a crisis. The morning was ushered in by a salute of thirteen guns from the Federal ship *Hamilton*, moored off the Bowling Green. This vessel had been built for the occasion and presented by the ship-carpenters. It was equipped as a frigate of thirty-two guns, twenty-seven feet keel and ten beam, with everything complete in proportion, both in hull and rigging, and was manned with upwards of thirty sailors, and a full complement of officers, under command of the veteran Commo-

Hosted by Google

dore James Nicholson. It was drawn through the streets by ten beautiful horses.

The procession was formed upon a scale of vast magnitude, and it being the first of the kind in New York — or in America — which nothing since has excelled in magnificence of design or splendor of effect, a brief outline of its principal features will vividly illustrate the spirit of the age. It was marshaled in ten divisions, in honor of the ten States that had already acceded to the Constitution. The Grand Marshal was Colonel Richard Platt. His associate officers were Morgan Lewis, Nicholas Fish, Aquila Giles, James Fairlie, William Popham, and Abijah Hammond.

First came an escort of light-horse preceded by trumpeters and a body of artillery with a field-piece. Then foresters with axes, preceding and following Christopher Columbus, on horseback. Farmers came next, Nicholas Cruger, in farmer's costume, conducting a plow drawn by three yoke of oxen. John Watts, also in farmer's dress, guided a harrow drawn by oxen and horses, followed by a number of gentlemen farmers carrying implements of husbandry. A newly invented threshing-machine was manipulated by Baron Pollnitz and other gentleman farmers in farmers' garb, grinding and threshing grain as they passed along. Mounted upon a fine gray horse, elegantly caparisoned, and led by two colored men in white Oriental dresses and turbans, Anthony Walton White bore the arms of the United States in sculpture, preceding the Society of the Cincinnati in full military uniform. Gardeners followed in green aprons, with the tools of their trade; and then the tailors, attended by a band of music, making a brilliant display. The measurers of grain were headed by James Van Dyke, their banner representing the measures used in their business, with the lines: —

> "Federal measures, and measures true,
> Shall measure out justice to us and to you."

The bakers were headed by John Quackenboss and Frederick Stymetz. Ten apprentices, dressed in white with blue sashes, each carrying a large rose, decorated with ribbons, and ten journeymen in like costume, carrying implements of the craft, were followed by a large square platform mounted on wheels, drawn by ten bay horses, bearing the "Federal Loaf," into which was baked a whole barrel of flour, and labeled with the names in full length of the ten States that had ratified the Constitution. Their banner represented the decline of trade under the old confederation. The brewers paraded horses and drays with hogsheads ornamented with hop-vines and barley. Upon the first, mounted on a tun of ale, was a beautiful boy of eight years, in close-fitting flesh-colored silk, representing Bacchus, with a silver goblet in his hand.

Hosted by Google

The second division was headed by the coopers, led by Peter Stoutenburgh. Thirteen apprentices, each thirteen years of age, dressed in white shirts and trousers, with green ribbons, on their ankles, carried kegs under their left arms. They were followed by forty-two more in white leathern aprons, with green oak branches in their hats, and white oak branches in their right hands; upon a car drawn by four bay horses decorated with green ribbons and oak branches were coopers at work under John Post, as boss, upon an old cask, the staves of which all their skill could not keep together; and, in apparent despair at their repeated failures, they suddenly betook themselves to the construction of a new, fine, tight, iron-bound keg, which bore the name of the "New Constitution." Butchers followed with a car drawn by four horses, each mounted by a boy dressed in white, upon which was a stall neatly furnished, and butchers and boys busily at work; it also bore a fine bullock of a thousand pounds' weight, which was presented to the committee by the butchers and roasted on the ground during the afternoon. This car was followed by one hundred of the trade in clean white aprons. The banners were carried by William Wright and John Perrin. The tanners and curriers carried a picturesque emblem with the motto, "By union we rise to splendor." The skinners, leather-breeches makers, and glovers were dressed in buckskin waistcoats, breeches, gloves, and garters — with bucks' tails in their hats. James Mott was the standard-bearer, their motto being, "Americans, encourage your own manufactures." To these William C. Thompson, the parchment manufacturer, attached himself, with a standard of parchment, inscribed, "American manufactured." The third division was happily and ingeniously conceived, and most effective in the novelty of its display; the cordwainers led, headed by James McCready, bearing a flag with the arms of the craft, inscribed, "Federal Cordwainers," followed by twelve masters; then came the car of the Sons of St. Crispin, drawn by four milk-white horses with postilions in livery, upon which was a shop with ten men diligently at work; in the rear of the main body of three hundred and forty workmen Anthony Bolton bore a similar flag to the one in front. The fourth division commenced with the carpenters, who numbered, altogether, upwards of two hundred; each carried a rule in his hand, and a scale and dividers hung from his neck with a blue ribbon. The furriers attracted great attention, their leader bearing a white bear-skin; he was followed by an Indian in native costume loaded with furs, notwithstanding it was one of the hottest days in July; a procession of workmen, clad in fur-trimmed garments, and a horse led by an Indian in a beaver blanket with two bears sitting upon packs of furs upon his back, terminated the show, together with the unique figure of one of the prin-

Hosted by Google

cipal men dressed in a superb scarlet blanket, wearing an elegant cap and plumes, and smoking a tomahawk pipe.

The hatters wore blue cockades and blue sashes; they numbered about seventy. The peruke-makers and hair-dressers, forty-five in all, displayed the arms of the trade — a wig in quarters, with three razors for a crest. The artificial florists carried a white flag ornamented with flowers; the whitesmiths, an elegant pedestal of open scroll-work supporting the arms of the trade — Vulcan's arm and hand with hammer; the cutlers wore steel breastplates and green silk aprons; the confectioners bore Bacchus's cup in sugar, four and one half feet in circumference, and an enormous "Federal Cake." The stone-masons displayed the Temple of Fame supported by thirteen pillars, ten finished and three unfinished, with the inscription: —

"The foundation is firm, the materials are good,
Each pillar 's cemented with patriots' blood."

The decorations of the societies were of the greatest variety and significance, and the image of Hamilton was carried aloft on banners in every part of the procession, the Constitution in his right hand and the Confederation in his left. He had to all appearances turned the scale for the Union, and fame was indeed crowning him with well-earned and enduring laurels.

The upholsterers displayed upon a superbly carpeted car, drawn by six horses, the Federal chair of State, prepared by William Mooney, afterwards Grand Sachem of the Tammany Society, above which was a rich canopy nineteen feet high, overlaid with deep-blue satin, hung with festoons and fringes, gold and glitter; on the right of the chair stood John De Grushe, representing the Goddess of Liberty, with a scroll, inscribed "Federal Constitution, 1788," and on the left was a figure in the character of Justice, blindfolded and bearing the sword and balance.

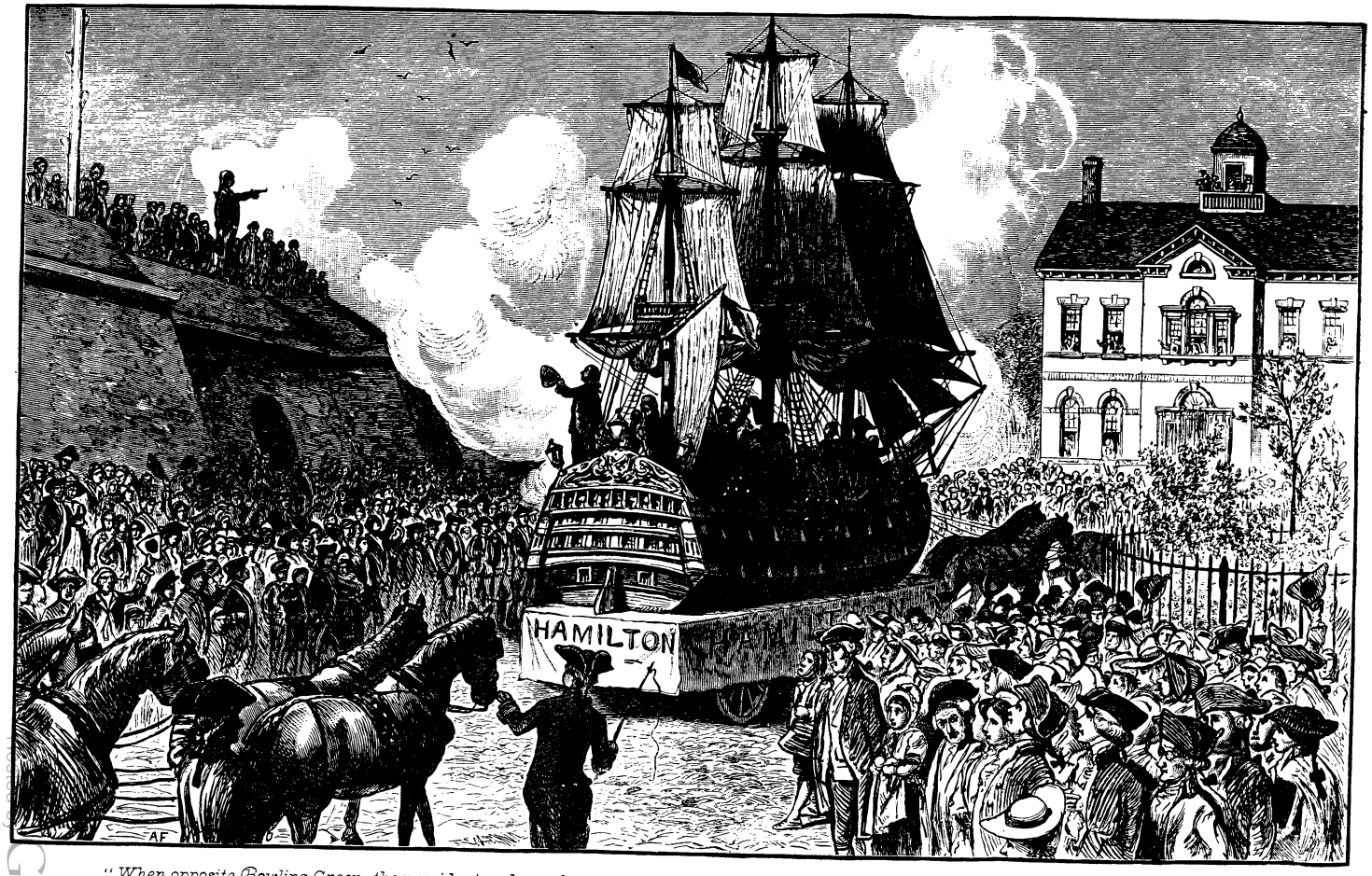
The picture of the scene will not be perfect without the bricklayers, with their motto, "In God is our trust;" the painters and glaziers, with various specimens of their handicraft; the cabinet-makers, with a car drawn by four beautiful horses, upon which a table and a cradle were completed during the march; the chair-makers, sixty or more, with the motto upon their standard, —

"The Federal States in union bound,
O'er all the world our chairs are found";

the ivory-turners and musical-instrument makers, their standard representing Apollo playing on a lyre, with a border of musical instruments festooned in the manner of trophies; the lace and fringe weavers, bearing orange colors elevated on a gilt standard, with the device of an angel

Hosted by Google

Hosted by Google



"When opposite Bowling Green, the president and members of Congress were discovered standing upon the fort, and the Ship instantly brought to, and fired a salute of thirteen guns, followed by three cheers, which were returned by the Congressional dignitaries." *Page 225.*

Digitized by Google

bearing a scroll, inscribed, "Federal Constitution," and underneath, "O, never let it perish in your hands, but piously transmit it to your children"; the paper-stainers, with standard borne by John Colles; the civil engineers, carrying a design of a dock for building and repairing men-of-war; the shipwrights, with Noah's ark upon their banner; the blacksmiths and nailers, numbering one hundred and twenty, who began and completed an anchor upon their stage during the march, while their motto floated in the breeze, —

"Forge me strong, finish me neat,
I soon shall moor a Federal fleet";

the ship-joiners; the boat-builders; the block and pump makers, with a stage upon which they made a complete pump on the route; the sail-makers, who, in picturesque attire, with pine branches in their hats, constructed a ship's foretopsail upon a car drawn by four horses, and sewed about fifty-six yards on a steering sail; and the riggers, to the number of forty-one, headed by Richard Clark, bearing a standard representing a ship in process of being rigged, with the motto, —

"Fit me well, and rig me neat,
And join me to the Federal fleet."

But by far the most imposing part of the gorgeous pageant was the Federal ship with Hamilton's name emblazoned upon each side of it, heading the seventh division, its crew going through every nautical preparation and movement for storms, calms, and squalls, as it moved slowly through the streets; when abreast Beaver Street the proper signal for a pilot brought a pilot-boat, eighteen feet long, upon a wagon drawn by a pair of horses, from its harbor to the ship's weather-quarter, and a pilot was received on board; when opposite Bowling Green the president and members of Congress were discovered standing upon the fort, and the ship instantly brought to and fired a salute of thirteen guns, followed by three cheers, which were returned by the Congressional dignitaries; when in front of the house of William Constable, in Pearl Street, Mrs. Edgar came to the window and presented the ship with a suit of colors; while abreast of Old Slip, the Spanish Government vessel saluted the *Hamilton* with thirteen guns, which was returned with as much promptness as though actually a ship of war upon the high seas. The Marine Society followed in the wake of the pilot-boat, the president wearing a gold anchor at his left breast. The printers, book-binders, and stationers came next, preceded by Hugh Gaine and Samuel Loudon on horseback. Upon a stage drawn by four horses was a printing-press, with compositors and pressmen at work, several hundred copies of a song written by Duer being struck off and distributed among the crowd during the march.

Hosted by Google

The eighth division consisted of three hundred cartmen in gay equipments; a horse-doctor bearing a standard with a curious device; a band of mathematical instrument makers, with banner encircled by ten stars, exhibiting a Hadley's quadrant telescope, compass, and hour-glass, with the motto, "Trade and Navigation"; a few carvers and engravers; coach and harness makers, preceded by a stage drawn by ten black horses, with men at work; coppersmiths, with a significant standard; tin-plate workers, exhibiting "The Federal Tin Warehouse," raised on ten pillars, with the motto, —

"When three more pillars rise,
Our union will the world surprise";

pewterers; gold and silver smiths; potters; chocolate-makers, with the device upon one side of their banner of a man with thirteen heads looking different ways, and upon the other ten men supporting "one presidential head"; tobacconists, numbering forty-five, with their arms encompassed by thirteen tobacco-plants, and each carrying a hand of tobacco with ten leaves bound closely together; dyers dressed in various colors, their motto being, "Give glory to God"; brush-makers with a beautiful banner, and carrying a large brush called a Turk's head, upon staves twelve feet long; tallow-chandlers, bearing a flag with thirteen stripes, beneath which was a picture of Washington on one side, and of Hamilton on the other — anticipating the administration of the first President of the new nation — and over the arms of the trade were thirteen candles, ten burning and three not lighted; and the saddlers, harness, and whip makers, followed by a richly caparisoned horse led by a groom with an elegant whip in his hand, and ten stable-boys dressed in character.

Every class of the population participated in this remarkable procession. In the ninth division marched the judges and lawyers in their robes, preceded by the sheriff and coroner; John Lawrence, John Cozine, and Robert Troup bore the new Constitution elegantly engrossed on vellum, and ten students of law followed, bearing in order the ratifications of the ten States. The Philological Society, headed by its president, Josiah Ogden Hoffman, came next, the standard, with its arms, borne by William Dunlap; Noah Webster, the great American lexicographer, was in the procession. The Regents of the University, and the president, professors, and students of Columbia College, all in their academic dresses, next appeared, their banner emblematical of science. Then the Chamber of Commerce, merchants and traders, John Broome, president of the Chamber, and William Maxwell, vice-president of the Bank of New York, in a chariot, and William Laight on horseback, bearing a standard with thirteen stars about an oval field, and Mercury surrounded by em-

Hosted by Google

blems of commerce supporting the arms of the city. The tenth division embraced clergymen, physicians, scholars, gentlemen, and strangers, preceded by a blue flag with the motto, "United we stand, divided we fall." In the rear of the whole was a detachment of artillery.

The spectacle furnishes a broader view of the various elements and industries, and teaches us more of the real character of the inhabitants of the city at that time than any chapter of description extant. No occasion better deserves a place in history. It was not the triumphal entry of a conqueror, with trophies of war, and captives in chains, as in the days of antiquity, but an exhibition of all the implements of the useful arts, in which the trades vied with the merchants and scholars in celebrating the victory of Hamilton for the Constitution, and in manifesting the rapturous attachment of an intelligent people to a powerful yet free government, which should preserve peace and concord among the States, and promote individual happiness and national glory — a government that has had vitality enough within itself to quell one of the greatest rebellions in the civilized world; a government which, in its moment of direst peril, when its chief head had been struck down by an assassin's hand, was so perfect in its machinery that not a wheel was clogged, and which, proving itself sufficient for its continually extending territory, justly commands the respect of every nation on the globe. Well might New York do honor to Hamilton by these peculiar festivities.

The city was pervaded by a singular stillness as the novel procession moved along its chief streets — watched by multitudes even to the housetops — no sounds being heard save that of horses' hoofs, carriage-wheels, and the necessary salutes and signals. It disappeared beyond the trees and over the hills towards Canal Street and Broadway, the point where the Lutheran Church had been offered a plot of six acres, which the trustees decided "inexpedient to accept as a gift, since the land was not worth fencing in." The line was over a mile and a half long, and contained more than five thousand persons. A great banquet had been prepared at the Bayard country-seat near Grand Street, beneath a rustic pavilion temple; and the ship *Hamilton* clewed her topsails, and came to anchor in fine style. Tables were spread for six thousand persons, the president and members of Congress, and other distinguished personages, occupying one in the centre elevated a little above the others. Above their heads the pavilion terminated in a dome surmounted by a figure of Fame, with her trumpet proclaiming a new era, and holding a scroll, emblematic of the three great epochs of the War, "Independence, Alliance with France, and Peace." The colors of the

Hosted by Google

different nations who had formed treaties with the United States, and escutcheons inscribed with the names of the ten States which had ratified the Constitution, added greatly to the brilliancy of the scene. At four o'clock a salute of thirteen guns gave the signal for return to the city. The march occupied somewhat over an hour. At half past five the ship *Hamilton* anchored once more at the Bowling Green, amidst the acclamations of thousands. In the evening there was a display of fireworks under the direction of Colonel Bauman, city postmaster and commander of artillery, "whose constitutional irascibility," writes President Duer, "was exceedingly provoked by the moon, which shone with pertinacious brilliancy, as if in mockery of his feebler lights."

On the following Saturday, about nine o'clock in the evening, news reached the city of the adoption of the Constitution by the Convention at Poughkeepsie on Thursday. The bells pealed one long, loud cry of joy, and from the fort and the Federal ship *Hamilton* the discharge of artillery was deafening. Merchants and citizens, headed by some of the first characters, went to the houses of Hamilton, Jay, Livingston, Duane, and other members of the Convention, and testified their approval by giving three cheers before each. The general excitement was so great that many of the anti-Federalists also drank and shouted for the Constitution.

The immediate result was a cessation of rancorous party strife. The doctrine of State rights fell into disrepute. All eyes were turned towards the consummation of union, since it was no longer to be defeated. The public mind wondered at its own obstinacy as the prospect brightened; and the general satisfaction was increased by speculations upon what might have been the condition of the country as thirteen independent sovereignties eternally counteracting each other. Congress publicly announced the adoption of the Constitution on the 13th of September, and appointed the first Wednesday of the coming January for the people of the United States to choose electors for a chief magistrate under its provisions; the first Wednesday of February following was the day fixed for the electors to meet and make choice of a President. Wednesday, the fourth day of March, was designated for the meeting of a new Congress under the Constitution, and the general organization of the new government.

Sept. 13.

New York City was hilarious with anticipation, and began to extend her borders. The autumn of 1788 was emphatically one of sunshine. The elements favored every enterprise. The air was mild and balmy until December, the breezes blew softly, and the skies seemed to have adopted a new order of blue. In short, the city breathed a fresh atmos-

Hosted by Google

phere of promise, and every project prospered. The utmost activity prevailed. Houses sprung into sudden notice along the country roads above Chambers Street, more particularly in the vicinity of the rivers, and numerous costly warehouses arose in the lower part of the town. Industrious mechanics and tradesmen were finding means to procure modest homes of their own, and places of business multiplied in rapid ratio. All the trades bristled with new life. An electrical current seemed to have passed through every department of business.

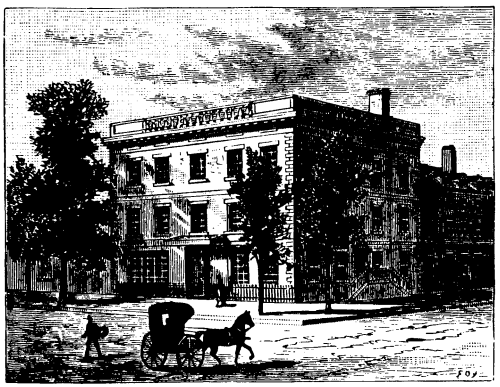
Prominent citizens hastened to contribute thirty-two thousand dollars for the enlargement and adornment of the old City Hall, preparatory to the novel event which was about to thrill the whole civilized world. The most intense anxiety was manifested by all classes concerning the settlement of the question as to the future seat of the national government. But it was hoped that liberality on the part of New York would determine the issue in her favor. The Federal Hall, when completed, presented quite a stately appearance. The first or basement story was in the Tuscan style, with seven openings; four massive pillars in the centre supported heavy arches, above which rose four Doric columns; the cornice was ingeniously divided to admit thirteen stars in the metopes, which, with the eagle and other insignia in the pediment, and the sculptures of thirteen arrows surrounded by olive branches over each window, marked it as a building set apart for national purposes. The entrance fronting on Broad Street was through a lofty vestibule paved with marble and elegantly finished. The Hall of Representatives was of slightly octangular shape, sixty-one by fifty-eight feet in dimension, with an arched ceiling forty-six feet high in the centre. It had two galleries, a speaker's platform admirably arranged, and a separate chair and desk for each member. Its windows were large, and some sixteen feet above the floor, under which were the quaintest of fireplaces.

The Senate Chamber was a smaller apartment, forty by thirty feet in extent and twenty feet high, with an arched ceiling of light blue — a sun and thirteen stars in the centre. It was finished and decorated most artistically, and its numerous fireplaces were of highly polished variegated American marble. The President's chair, under a rich canopy of crimson damask, was elevated three feet above the floor. The chairs of the senators were arranged in semicircles, and covered with the same bright material as the canopy and curtains. It had three windows opening upon Wall Street, and a balcony twelve feet deep, guarded by an iron railing, where the President was to take the oath of office.

One of the finest mansions in the city stood on the corner of Cherry Street and Franklin Square. It was built by Walter Franklin, who had

Hosted by Google

in his lifetime been esteemed one of the richest merchants in New York, with, it is said, as much money in Russia as in America. In 1783 his widow, a lady of great beauty, was married to the distinguished Samuel Osgood, of the Treasury Board, who became the owner of the edifice, as also of the property in its vicinity where the Harper Brothers subsequently erected their world-renowned publishing establishment. This dwelling was selected as the official residence of the President, Osgood removing elsewhere that it might be burnished anew for its distinguished occupancy.[1]



Washington's Residence.
[The Walter Franklin House.]

While these and other preparations were being pushed with vigor, Gouverneur Morris sailed for France, arriving in Paris early in February. His first dinner was with Jefferson, and the second with Lafayette. He was received with charming cordiality by Lafayette's family, and one of his little daughters sang a song after they left the table which happened to be one of Morris's own composition. But the republicanism of Lafayette and the revolutionary projects and principles which were lighting up the whole French horizon were, in the view of Morris, greatly to be deplored. A sense of equality was maddening the French mind, and it struck Morris as irrational. Every man was giving advice to every other man; and each one in the high-colored pride of freedom thought it a great pity that

Dec. 18.

Samuel Osgood (born at Andover, Massachusetts, February 14, 1748, died in New York, August 12, 1813) was graduated from Cambridge with the highest honors in 1766; he studied theology, but, losing his health, became an importing merchant. In 1774, in view of the disturbed relations with Great Britain, he abandoned business, and was immediately sent to the Essex County Convention, and thence a delegate to the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts. He took part in the battle of Lexington, but was shortly elected to the State Legislature, and left the army, thinking he could serve the country best in a civil capacity. From 1780 to 1784 he was a member of the Continental Congress, and from 1785 to 1789, first commissioner of the United States Treasury; the bonds required for this last office were so heavy that he was about to decline the appointment rather than ask his friends to become security, but the Legislature of Massachusetts came forward in a body and became his bondsman, an honor never accorded to any other private individual. With the organization of the new government, he was made the first Postmaster-General of the United States. He subsequently held several positions of great trust in New York, where he resided until his death. He was distinguished for integrity, piety, and public spirit, and for scientific and literary attain-

Hosted by Google

he was not the king. He was at least equal to a king in his own estimation. And the more ignorant the man the greater his assumption of equality. "The literary people here, observing the abuses of their monarchical form," writes Morris, "imagine that everything must go better in proportion as it recedes from the present establishment, and in their closets they make men exactly suited to their systems; but unluckily they are such men as exist nowhere else, and least of all in France."

Notwithstanding the contrariety of opinion concerning the new Constitution, there was but one mind in the choice of a President. The American heart turned as naturally to Washington as the morning-glory of the garden to the rising sun. It is an isolated instance in the history of nations for one man to so possess the confidence and affection of a great people as to command every voice and vote in his favor, without the aid of a nominating convention, or any electioneering process whatever. But it was thus with the first President of the United States of America. 1789.

The election of the first Federal Congress under the Constitution was one of the most orderly elections the country had ever witnessed. The presidential electors met upon the day appointed and gave in their ballots. The results were immediately known, and preparations made accordingly, although no action could be given the new political machinery until Congress should assemble. The 4th of March was the time appointed. The City of New York was awakened at early dawn of that particular morning by the roar of cannon and the ringing of bells. But eight senators and thirteen representatives appeared — not enough for a quorum in either house — which was owing partly to the severity of the weather and muddy roads. Stages were as yet few, and in out-of-the-way districts they had no fixed days for leaving specific points; and March 4.

ments, wrote several volumes on religious subjects, and was the author of a work on chronology. He was the son of Peter Osgood, descended from John Osgood of Wherwell, England, who sailed for Boston in 1638. He married Martha Brandon, in 1775, who died childless in 1778. Eight years afterward he married Maria Bowne, the widow of Walter Franklin, whose father was Daniel Bowne, and whose mother was the sister of Governor Winthrop of Massachusetts. She had three daughters at the time of her marriage to Mr. Osgood, Maria Franklin, first wife of De Witt Clinton; Sarah Franklin, who became Mrs. John Lake Norton; and Hannah Franklin, who married George, the brother of De Witt Clinton. The children of Samuel and Maria Bowne Osgood were: Martha Brandon Osgood, second wife of the French Minister, Citizen Edmond Charles Genet, and mother of Mr. George C. Genet, of New York (the first wife of Genet was Cornelia Tappan Clinton, the second daughter of Governor George Clinton); Julia, who married her cousin, Samuel Osgood; and Susan Maria, who married Moses Field of New York — great-grandson of Benjamin Field and Hannah Bowne, daughter of John Bowne, the first of the Bownes in this country — and was the mother of Judge Maunsell B. Field, assistant secretary of the Treasury under Chase.

Hosted by Google

they not infrequently tarried on the route for storms to pass, or to repair breakages. March was the worst month of the year for traveling, all comfortable facilities were wanting, and the roads in many places, as well as the fords of the rivers, were rendered impassable by floods.

"We crossed the Raritan, at New Brunswick, in a scow, open at both ends to receive and discharge the carriage, without unharnessing or dismounting," wrote a traveler of the time, "and the scow was pulled across the river by a rope. We passed the Delaware in another scow, which was navigated only by setting poles." De Warville described a journey from Philadelphia to New York, made in "a kind of open wagon, hung with double curtains of leather and woolen cloth — carriages," said he, "which keep up the idea of equality, the member of Congress riding beside the shoemaker who elected him, in fraternity." Between New York and Boston stages were constructed usually without springs. "By the time we had run thirty miles among the rocks," wrote De Warville, "we were convinced that a carriage with springs would very soon have been overset and broken." The mails were conveyed to and from New York, Boston, Albany, and Philadelphia three times a week in summer and twice a week in winter. But the reader will readily perceive that communication between distant portions of the country was liable to serious delays.

April 6. The first business after the organization of Congress, on the 6th of April, was to open and count the votes for President. Washington received every one. The majority of the votes for vice-President elected John Adams, who had returned from his mission to England in 1788. The same day Secretary Thompson was appointed to convey official information to Washington, and the next morning left New York on horseback for Virginia; about the same hour a messenger started for Boston, to communicate the intelligence to John Adams.

A puzzling question immediately arose. How should the President be addressed in his official capacity? The first title suggested was "Excellency." This did not meet general approval. "Roger Sherman has set his head at work to devise some style of address more novel and dignified," wrote John Armstrong on the 7th. "His Highness the President of the United States and Protector of their Liberties" was proposed; also, "His Serene Highness," and "High Mightiness." After mature consideration it was decided to reject all titles whatever and adopt the simple name of "President of the United States."

April 16. Thompson arrived at Mount Vernon on the 14th, and on the morning of the 16th Washington started for the seat of government. He wrote to Knox that his "feelings were not unlike those of a culprit going to the place of execution"; and in his diary recorded

Hosted by Google

his "mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than he had words to express." His journey, however, was like one continued triumphal procession. Cities, towns, and villages vied with each other in doing him honor. People gathered by the roadside and shouted as he rode by. Soldiers were paraded, triumphal arches were erected, and flowers were strewn along his pathway. At Gray's Ferry, over the Schuylkill, he was escorted through long avenues of laurels transplanted from the forests, bridged with arches of laurel branches, and as he passed under the last arch, a youth concealed in the foliage dropped upon his head a beautiful civic crown of laurel, at which tumultuous shouts arose from the immense multitude. At Trenton a magnificent triumphal arch, supported by thirteen pillars, had been erected by the ladies, and as the hero passed under it on his white charger, thirteen lovely maidens carrying baskets scattered flowers plentifully before him, singing at the same time an ode composed for the occasion. At Elizabethtown Point he was received by a committee from Congress, of which Elias Boudinot was chairman, and by Chancellor Livingston, Secretary Jay, Secretary Knox, the Commissioners of the Treasury, the Mayor and Recorder of New York, and other dignitaries.

An elegant barge constructed for the purpose of conveying him to the city was in waiting, manned by thirteen masters of vessels in white uniforms, commanded by Commodore Nicholson, in which he embarked, and as it moved from the shore other barges fancifully decorated fell into line. The glittering procession glided through the narrow strait between New Jersey and Staten Island, when, as if by magic, dozens of boats gay with flags and streamers dropped into its wake. All the vessels and sloops in the bay were clad in holiday attire, and each saluted Washington as he passed. The Spanish man-of-war, *Galveston*, displayed every flag and signal known among nations, as the presidential barge came abreast of her. Upon a sloop under full sail were some twenty-five gentlemen and ladies, singing an ode of welcome written for the occasion to the tune of "God save the King." Another small vessel came up, distributing sheets of a second ode, which a dozen fine voices were engaged in singing. Bands of music on boats upon all sides, perpetual huzzas, and the roar of artillery, filled the air, while over the whole exhilarating scene the sunshine fell from cloudless heavens.

The ferry stairs at Murray's Wharf were carpeted, and the rails hung with crimson. Governor Clinton received the President as he landed upon the shore which had been recovered from a powerful enemy through his own valor and good conduct, at which moment popular enthusiasm was at its climax. The streets were lined with inhabitants as thick as

Hosted by Google

they could stand, and the wildest and most prolonged cheers rent the air. Military companies were in waiting to conduct Washington to the mansion prepared for his reception, but it was with difficulty that a passage could be pressed through the joyous throng. Colonel Morgan Lewis, aided by Majors Morton and Van Horne, led the way, and the various regiments were followed by the officers of the militia, two and two, the committee of Congress, the President elect with Governor Clinton, the President's suite, the Mayor and Aldermen of the city of New York, the clergy, the foreign ministers, and an immense concourse of citizens.

Every house on the route was decorated with flags and silken banners, garlands of flowers and evergreens. Every window, to the highest story, was filled with fair women and brave men. Every inanimate object seemed alive with the waving of handkerchiefs and hats. From the skies, apparently, fell flowers like snow-flakes in a storm. And in every possible form of unique device and ingenious ornamentation the name of WASHINGTON was suspended from roof to roof, and upon fanciful arches constructed for the occasion. The multitude shouted until hoarse, and the bells and the guns caught up the echoes, and with ceaseless clamor and deafening din proclaimed the universal gladness.

Upon reaching his destination Washington was immediately waited upon and congratulated by the foreign ministers, and by political characters, military celebrities, public bodies, and private citizens of distinction. He then dined with Governor Clinton at the gubernatorial residence in Pearl Steet. In the evening the entire city was brilliantly illuminated.

John Adams had arrived in New York two days before, and taken the oath without parade and his place as president of the Senate. In his opening speech he said it would be impossible to increase the confidence of the country in Washington, or add in the smallest way to his glory; he asked: "Where, in looking over the catalogues of the first magistrates of nations, whether called presidents, consuls, kings, or princes, shall we find one whose commanding talents and virtues and overruling good-fortune have so completely united all hearts and voices in his favor — engaging the esteem and admiration of foreign nations and fellow-citizens with equal unanimity? Providence has indeed marked out the head of this nation with a hand so distinctly visible as to have been seen by all men and mistaken by none."

Richmond Hill House became the residence of the Vice-President. Mrs. Adams was charmed with the loveliness of the situation, and her vivid pen-touches invest our authentic illustration of the mansion upon a former page with fresh interest. "In natural beauty," she writes, "it might vie with the most delicious spot I ever saw. It is a mile and a

Hosted by Google

half distant from the city of New York. The house stands upon an eminence; at an agreeable distance flows the noble Hudson, bearing upon its bosom innumerable small vessels laden with the fruitful productions of the adjacent country. Upon my right hand are fields beautifully variegated with grass and grain, to a great extent, like the valley of Honiton in Devonshire. Upon my left the city opens to view, intercepted here and there by a rising ground and an ancient oak. In front, beyond the Hudson, the Jersey shores present the exuberance of a rich, well-cultivated soil. In the background is a large flower-garden, enclosed with a hedge and some very handsome trees. Venerable oaks and broken ground covered with wild shrubs surround me, giving a natural beauty to the spot which is truly enchanting. A lovely variety of birds serenade me morning and evening, rejoicing in their liberty and security."

This rural picture of a point near where Charlton now crosses Varick Street naturally strikes the prosaic mind familiar with the locality at the present day as a trick of the imagination. But truth is stranger, and not infrequently more interesting, than fiction.

The six never-to-be-forgotten days between Washington's arrival and his inauguration were devoted to the perfection of preparations for the imposing ceremonial. The city opened its hospitable doors for the entertainment of guests from all parts of the Union. The crush was bewildering. Every public house was filled to its utmost capacity, and the private mansions overflowed. "We shall remain here if we have to sleep in tents, as many will have to do," wrote Miss Bertha Ingersoll. "While we are waiting at Mrs. Vandervoort's, in Maiden Lane, till after dinner, two of our beaux are running about town, determined to obtain the best places for us to stay at which can be opened for love, money, or the most persuasive speeches." New York had never before housed and sheltered a gathering of such magnitude. Everybody struggled for a glimpse of Washington. The aged declared their readiness to die if they could once behold his face. The young described him as looking more grand and noble than any human being they had ever seen.

A national salute ushered in the morning of the 30th of April. The day had arrived for the final step in the creation of a national government. All business was suspended. The streets were filled with men and women in holiday attire, while constant arrivals from the adjoining country by the common roads and ferry-boats, and by packets which had been all night on the Sound or coming down the Hudson, swelled the eager throng. At nine o'clock the bells pealed merrily from every steeple in the city, then paused; and presently in slow measured tones summoned the people to the churches "to implore

April 30.

Hosted by Google

the blessing of Heaven on the nation and its chosen President — so universal was a religious sense of the importance of the occasion."[1]

At the close of these solemn services the military began to march from their respective quarters with unfurled banners and inspiring music. At noon they formed under the immediate direction of Colonel Morgan Lewis, in Cherry Street, opposite the Presidential mansion. From the Senate, Ralph Izard, Tristam Dalton, and Richard Henry Lee, and from the House of Representatives, Egbert Benson, Charles Carroll, and Fisher Ames had been chosen a joint committee of arrangements. The procession moved in the following order: the various regiments, the sheriff of the city and county of New York, the committee of the Senate, the President elect, the committee of the House of Representatives, Chancellor Robert R. Livingston, Secretary John Jay, Secretary Henry Knox, the Commissioners of the Treasury, and distinguished citizens. They marched through Pearl Street and Broad to Wall Street; when in front of Federal Hall the troops formed in line upon each side of the way, through which Washington, having alighted from his chariot, walked in the midst of his illustrious attendants to the building, and ascended to the Senate Chamber, where Congress had just assembled; he was received at the door by the Vice-President, and conducted to the chair of State. After formally introducing Washington to the august body, Adams addressed him with stately ceremony: —

"Sir, the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States are ready to attend you to take the oath required by the Constitution, which will be administered by the Chancellor of the State of New York."

"I am ready to proceed," was the grave reply.

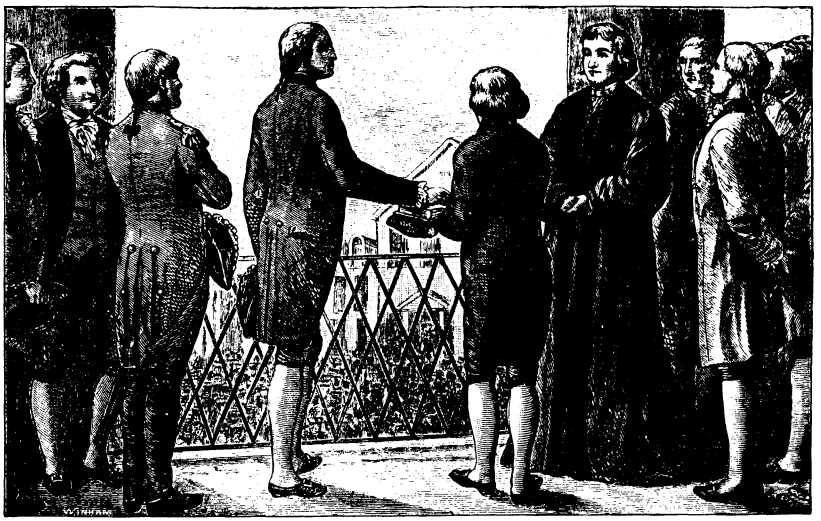
The Vice-President then conducted Washington to the balcony, accompanied by the senators, and other gentlemen of distinction. Broad Street and Wall Street, each way, were filled with a sea of upturned faces — the windows and house-tops crowded with gayly dressed ladies — and a silence reigned as profound as if every living form which composed the vast assemblage was a statue carved in stone. Washington's fine figure appeared in the centre of the group of statesmen between the two pillars,

[1] The clergymen of the city in 1789 were Rev. Dr. John Rodgers of the Presbyterian Church, Rev. Dr. John Mason of the Scotch Presbyterian, Bishop Provost, Rev. Benjamin Moore (afterwards Bishop), and Rev. Abraham Beach of the Episcopal, Rev. Dr. John Henry Livingston and Rev. Dr. William Linn of the Dutch Reformed, Rev. Dr. John Christopher Kunze (Professor of Oriental Languages in Columbia College) of the Lutheran, Rev. Dr. John Daniel Gross (Professor of the German Language and of Moral Philosophy in Columbia College) of the German, Rev. Mr. Morrill and Rev. Mr. Cloud of the Methodist, Rev. Benjamin Foster of the Baptist, and Rev. Gershom Siexas of the Jewish Synagogue.

Hosted by Google

his head uncovered, and his powdered locks gathered and tied in the prevailing fashion of that day. Opposite Washington stood the Chancellor in his robes, ready to administer the oath of office, and between them the Secretary of the Senate held an open Bible upon a rich crimson cushion, upon which Washington rested his hand.

The Chancellor pronounced slowly and distinctly the words of the oath. The Bible was raised, and as the President bowed to kiss the sacred volume, he said audibly, "I swear," adding with fervor, his eyes closed, that his whole soul might be absorbed in the supplication, "so help me God."



Washington taking the Oath.

"It is done," said the Chancellor; then, turning to the multitude, he waved his hand, crying in a loud voice, —

"Long live George Washington, President of the United States!"

Silence was at an end. A flag was instantly displayed on the cupola of Federal Hall, and all the bells in the city rang one triumphant peal. Shouts and acclamations burst from the waiting thousands, and repeated again and again, echoed and re-echoed, and were answered by cannon from every direction upon both land and water, until it seemed as if the city would be jarred from its very foundations.

And even now, at the end of nearly a century, who among us can be brought into a close review of the sublime incidents of this creative epoch in the history of nations without a draught from the same ecstatic fountain of emotion. With the act which completed the organization of the

Hosted by Google

government of the Union — the impressive oath, solemnly administered and reverently uttered — the life-current leaped into a perpetual flow, and our national greatness was secured.

Washington bowed to the assemblage, and returned to the Senate Chamber, where, after the members of Congress and other dignitaries had taken their seats, he arose and delivered a short inaugural address. He then proceeded to St. Paul's Chapel in Broadway, attended by Vice-President Adams, Chancellor Livingston, Secretary Jay, Secretary Knox, Commissioners Osgood and Walter Livingston, the members of Congress, and many other distinguished characters, where prayers were read by Bishop Provost, who had been chosen one of the chaplains of Congress. These services concluded, the President was escorted to his own residence.

In the evening the city was illuminated with unparalleled splendor. Every public building was in a blaze of light. The front of the little theatre in John Street was filled with transparencies, one of which represented Fame like an angel descending from heaven to crown Washington with the emblems of immortality. At the Bowling Green was an enormous transparency, with Washington's portrait in the centre under a figure of Fortitude, and the two branches of the new government upon his right and left under the forms of Justice and Wisdom. All the private residences of the city were brilliantly lighted, but none more effectively than those of the French and Spanish ministers, who seemed to have exercised a generous rivalry in their preparations. They both lived on Broadway, in the vicinity of the Bowling Green. The doors and windows of De Moustier's mansion were bordered with lamps, which shone upon numerous paintings suggestive of the past, the present, and the future of American history, from the pencil of Madame de Brehan, the sister of the Minister. Don Gardoqui's decorations were even more elaborate; the principal transparency in front of his residence contained figures of the Graces artistically executed amid a pleasing variety of emblems; and in the windows were moving pictures so skillfully devised as to present the illusion of a living panorama in a little spot of fairy-land. One of the vessels at anchor off the Battery resembled a pyramid of stars. The display of fireworks, under the direction of Colonel Bauman, was the finest New York had ever seen. Washington drove to the residence of Chancellor Livingston, on Broadway, from whose windows he obtained a full view of the imposing spectacle.

The days immediately following were chiefly occupied by the President in acquainting himself with the details of domestic and foreign affairs. In his desire to master the whole subject of our relations with other

Hosted by Google

nations, he applied himself with energy to the task of reading all the correspondence that had accumulated in the office of the Secretary since the close of the war. He also produced with his own hand abstracts of the reports which were made by the Secretaries Jay and Knox, and the Treasury commissioners, that he might better impress the actual condition of the different departments upon his memory. He employed Samuel Fraunces, proprietor of the famous Fraunces' Tavern, steward of his household. David Humphreys, the soldier, diplomatist, and poet, rendered essential service in the matter of admitting callers, instinctively understanding who were best entitled to an audience, and in what manner to dismiss others without giving offense. But the door was besieged from morning till night, and it was evident that some system must be established for the reception of visitors, in order that the President might have time for the performance of public duties. It was an affair of great delicacy. Popular theories must not be rudely jarred. Republicanism was a novelty, and it was fondly expected that the chief magistrate of the people would be accessible to every citizen. Washington was in favor of receiving every visitor on proper occasions and for reasonable purposes. But he was deeply impressed with the necessity of maintaining the dignity of his office with forms that would command deference and respect; and he hoped to draw a well-balanced line between too much ceremony on the one hand and an excess of familiarity on the other.

He took counsel of the renowned group of statesmen by whom he was surrounded and sustained. Opinions upon this subject, as upon all others, were at variance. Vice-President Adams, like Lord Bellomont nearly a hundred years before, had seen power so constantly associated with pomp in foreign lands, that he found it difficult to believe that the substance would exist unless "human minds collected into nations" were dazzled by the trappings. He talked of chamberlains and masters of ceremony. Secretary Jay better understood the American disposition, and calmly advocated an orderly uniform system which should not overstep the limits of republican simplicity. Hamilton was in favor of maintaining the dignity of the office, but pertinently suggested caution, lest too high a tone shock the prevalent notions of equality. A line of conduct which, it was hoped, would combine public advantage with private convenience was finally adopted. The President appointed Tuesday afternoon, from three o'clock until four, for the reception of visits of courtesy. No invitations were extended, but he was prepared to see whoever came. Visitors were shown into the room by a servant, and retired at their option without ceremony. "At their first entrance they salute me, and I them, and as many as I can, I talk to," wrote Washington. "Gentlemen, often in

Hosted by Google

great numbers, come and go; chat with each other, and act as they please. What 'pomp' there is in all this I am unable to discover." Foreign ambassadors and official characters were received on other days of the week. And the President was always accessible to persons who wished to see him on business. On Sundays the President attended St. Paul's Chapel in the morning and spent the afternoon and evening at home, never receiving company, however, unless some intimate or family friend.

The Constitution left all the details of administration to the action of Congress, which moved slowly in the matter of establishing the three departments of State, the Treasury, and that of War — to which last was added whatever might appertain to the naval concerns of the United States. Troublesome questions arose and were argued with spirit. The President, for instance, was empowered to appoint the heads of departments, but the Constitution was silent as to where the power of removal was lodged. Equally eminent men stood opposed in the discussion. It was decided in favor of the President. But that it should not be deemed a grant of power by Congress, the bill was so worded as to imply a constitutional power already existing in the President, thus, "Whenever the Seretary shall be removed by the President of the United States," etc.; and it is still a matter open to dispute whether our First Congress decided wisely and well.

At the President's request John Jay officiated as Secretary of State until the following spring. In forming his cabinet, Washington asked Jay's acceptance of any place he might prefer. But with the organization of the National Judiciary it seemed eminently fitting that Jay should become the first Chief Justice of the United States. He had been the first Chief Justice of the State of New York in that most critical of all periods, when the armies of his late sovereign were spreading terror and desolation around him. His habits of mind, calm serenity, and great legal acumen were peculiarly adapted to that branch of the government termed by Washington "the keystone of our political fabric," through which the laws of the land were to be faithfully and firmly administered and Jay was disposed to exert his talents for the common good. Thus he received the appointment, in September, although the Supreme Court was not fully organized until the following April; and he will ever remain to the nation and the world an example of personal and judicial purity. The words of one of the great masters of our language have passed into history — "When the ermine of the judicial robe fell on John Jay it touched nothing less spotless than itself."

Oliver Ellsworth was chairman of the committee who prepared the bill establishing the Supreme Court, and circuit and district courts, an organi-

Hosted by Google

zation which has remained substantially the same to the present time. It was to hold two sessions annually at the seat of government. Five associate justices were appointed — William Cushing, the first chief justice of Massachusetts as a State; James Wilson, one of the Convention which framed the Constitution; Robert H. Harrison, chief justice of Maryland; John Blair, of Virginia, also one of the famous Convention; and John Rutledge, the brave-spirited South Carolina statesman whom Patrick Henry pronounced the greatest orator in the First Continental Congress. Harrison declined, and James Iredell of North Carolina, was appointed in his stead. These gentlemen procured homes and brought their families to reside at the capital.

Thomas Jefferson, who had obtained permission to return from France, was made Secretary of State. Hamilton was placed at the head of the Treasury Department. Knox was continued in the War office. Governor Edmund Randolph, of Virginia, was chosen Attorney-General. And Samuel Osgood, of New York, received the appointment of Postmaster-General.

The President dined with Chancellor Livingston, with Secretary and Mrs. Jay, with Governor Clinton, and with Hamilton at his pleasant home in Wall Street, during the week following the inauguration. On the 7th of May a public ball was given in his honor. A writer of the day says, "The collection of ladies was numerous and brilliant, and dressed with consummate taste and elegance." Mrs. Washington had not yet reached the city, but Mrs. Jay and Mrs. Hamilton were among those present; also Lady Stirling and her two daughters, Lady Mary Watts and Lady Kitty Duer; Mrs. Peter Van Brugh Livingston, Lord Stirling's sister; Mrs. Clinton, Mrs. Mayor Duane, Mrs. James Beekman, Lady Temple, Lady Christina Griffin, Mrs. Chancellor Livingston, Mrs. Richard Montgomery, Mrs. John Langdon, Mrs. Elbridge Gerry, Mrs. Livingston of Clermont, the Misses Livingston, Mrs. William S. Smith, daughter of the Vice-President, the beautiful bride of James Homer Maxwell, who as Miss Van Zandt had repeatedly danced with Washington while the army was at Morristown, Mrs. Edgar, Mrs. McComb, Mrs. Dalton, the Misses Bayard, Madame de Brehan, Madame de la Forest, and Mrs. Bishop Provost. The President, the Vice-President, the Secretaries of State and War, the majority of the members of both Houses of Congress, the governor of New York, the mayor of the city, the Chancellor, the French and Spanish Ministers, Baron Steuben, Colonel Duer, and a great many other distinguished guests rendered the occasion memorable. The company numbered over three hundred. Washington was the star of the evening. He danced in two cotillions. His partners were Mrs. Peter

May 7.

Hosted by Google

Van Brugh Livingston and Mrs. Hamilton. He also danced a minuet with Mrs. Maxwell.

On the following Thursday evening De Moustier gave a magnificent ball in honor of the President at his residence in Broadway. Madame de Brehan was heard to declare that she "had exhausted every resource to produce an entertainment worthy of France." Two sets of cotillion dancers in complete military costume, one in that of France and the other in the buff and blue of America, represented our alliance with that country. Four of the ladies wore blue ribbons round their heads with American flowers, and four were adorned with red ribbons and the flowers of France. Even the style of the dance was uniquely arranged to show the happy union between the two nations. One large apartment was devoted to refreshments, in which the whole wall was covered with shelves and filled with fruits, ices, and wines, supplied to the guests by servants standing behind a table in the center of the room.

May 14.

Mrs. Washington left Mount Vernon in her private carriage on the 19th to join her husband in New York; she was accompanied by her grandchildren, Eleanor Custis and George Washington Parke Custis, and attended by a small escort on horseback. All the large towns and cities on her route sent cavalcades of dragoons and citizens out to meet her, processions defiled on either side of the highway for her carriage to pass, cheers and acclamations everywhere greeted her approach, and the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the wise and the simple, were alike eager to do her homage. When within seven miles of Philadelphia she was met by a brilliant company of ladies and gentlemen in carriages, and conducted into the Quaker City with distinguished ceremony, where she was the guest of Mrs. Robert Morris. She left for New York on the Monday following, accompanied by Mrs. Morris. It rained violently in the afternoon, and they spent the night at Trenton. The weather was charming on Tuesday, and they journeyed as far as "Liberty Hall" in Elizabeth, the home of Governor Livingston, where they were to be entertained. The mansion was charmingly decorated with May-flowers, and the surrounding trees upon every side were filled with beautiful banners. Mrs. Jay was present to aid her father and mother in extending graceful hospitalities to the wife of the President. The guest-chamber set apart for Mrs. Washington was the one over the Governor's Library. Mrs. Robert Morris occupied the apartment over the great entrance hall in the center of the front of the dwelling.

May 19.

The President entered his elegant barge at five o'clock the next morning, and accompanied by John Jay, Robert Morris, and other distinguished characters, crossed the Bay and reached "Liberty Hall" in time to

Hosted by Google

breakfast with Mrs. Washington. When the Presidential party returned to the city, conducting Mrs. Washington and her retinue, New York Bay presented a similar scene to that witnessed on the day of Washington's reception. As the unique craft, with thirteen pilots in white costume, approached the landing, bearing its precious burden, salutes were fired from all the war vessels at anchor, and from the Battery, while delighted throngs of people surged through the streets, filling the air with shouts of welcome.

Mrs. Governor Clinton, Mrs. Chancellor Livingston, Mrs. Hamilton, Lady Stirling, Lady Mary Watts, and Lady Kitty Duer were chief among the group of ladies who received Mrs. Washington. Mrs. Beekman, Mrs. Provost, Mrs. Livingston of Clermont, the Misses Livingston, the Misses Bayard, Mrs. Edgar, and the wives and daughters of the foreign ministers and members of Congress, with many others, paid their respects early on Thursday morning. On Thursday evening the following gentlemen dined informally at the President's table: Vice-President Adams, Governor Clinton, John Jay, the French Minister De Moustier, the Spanish Minister Gardoqui, General Arthur St. Clair, Speaker Muhlenberg, and Senators John Langdon, Ralph Izard, William Few, and Paine Wingate. The latter has left a description of this dinner. He says, no clergyman being present, Washington himself said grace, on taking his seat. He dined on a boiled leg of mutton, as it was his custom to eat of only one dish. After the dessert a single glass of wine was offered to each of the guests, when the President rose, the guests following his example, and repaired to the drawing-room, each departing at his option, without ceremony.

On Friday evening Mrs. Washington held her first reception, or levee, as it was styled, which was attended by all that was distinguished in official and fashionable society. Henceforward she received every Friday evening from eight until ten o'clock. These levees were arranged on the plan of the English and French drawing-rooms, visitors, entitled to the privilege by official station, social position, or established merit and character, came without special invitation; and full dress was required of all. The President was usually present. May 29.

It was not long ere Mrs. Washington was pronounced an "aristocrat," and her rigid exclusion of the ill-bred and unrefined from her levees was caustically criticised as "queenly" and "court-like." The dignity and formality of both the President and his wife rebuked all attempts at familiarity; thus without ostentation social intercourse assumed a high tone, and democratic rudeness not having yet gained the ascendency, cultured elegance, grace, and good manners prevailed.

Hosted by Google

While the bill was pending in Congress for the establishment of the heads of departments, and vigorous debates over a contemplated revenue system were occupying attention, the question of salaries to be paid the President, Vice-President, and other officials of the government came before the House. Washington had at his inauguration signified his wish to serve the country, as hitherto, without salary. But it was inexpedient to establish the precedent, as succeeding Presidents might not find it possible to incur a similar loss of time and money; and, moreover, Congress was required by the Constitution to provide compensation. It was, after many days, decided to fix upon a liberal sum, but to leave the style in which the President should live — it not being esteemed a legitimate subject for legislation — to the discretion and judgment of Washington himself. The pay of the Vice-President, and the Senators and Representatives, furnished food for lengthy and animated discussions. Some were for giving the Vice-President a daily, instead of a yearly allowance, and others thought the Senators deserved more than the Representatives because "they were the purified choice of the people." The various propositions for amending the Constitution were next in order. Virginia suggested twenty alterations in the organic instrument, Massachusetts nine, South Carolina four, Pennsylvania twelve, New Hampshire twelve, North Carolina twenty-six, and New York thirty-two. After mature deliberation seventeen amendments were adopted by two thirds of the House. The Senate reduced the number to twelve by omitting some, and merging the principles of two or more into one. When these twelve were transmitted to the legislatures of the States for ratification, ten only were accepted.

The first Congress was justly famous for its men of parliamentary talent and social accomplishment. The leading antagonists in the House were James Madison and Fisher Ames, particularly in debating the revenue system and the policy of assuming State debts incurred during the Revolution. Both were orators, able and impressive, but in different ways. Madison was the better logician, Ames possessed the greater imagination. Madison was profoundly versed in domestic concerns, financial and political economy. Ames reasoned from principles of general policy and constitutional and international jurisprudence. Madison's eloquence in depth and smoothness might be compared to the ocean in repose, that of Ames flowed like the current of some clear, beautiful river. Madison was the older by six well-rounded years. Ames was thirty-two. William Smith of South Carolina, one of the best debaters and most accomplished gentlemen that ever appeared in Congress from that State, sustained Ames with brilliant oratory; he resided in Broadway, next

Hosted by Google

door to the Spanish Minister. Theodore Sedgwick, Elbridge Gerry, and George Thacher, from Massachusetts, were all men of mark. Gerry was decidedly anti-Federal; but, unwilling to forfeit the good-will and friendship of those with whom he had been associated during the Revolution, he claimed to be neutral and impartial between the two parties. This course was denounced by Thacher, who was a celebrated wit, and, understanding the sensitive temperament of his colleague, made him the perpetual victim of daring humor and biting sarcasm. Connecticut was represented by Roger Sherman, Jonathan Trumbull, Benjamin Huntington, Jeremiah Wadsworth, and Jonathan Sturges. Trumbull was the son of the great war-governor of the same name, and had himself been secretary and aide to Washington, and a member of the chieftain's military family from 1780 to 1783. Hugh Williamson was the most conspicuous member from North Carolina. It was during this year that his marriage with Miss Apthorpe of New York was solemnized. Elias Boudinot, the philanthropist, was one of the leading New Jersey representatives. Speaker Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg and General Peter Muhlenberg, from Pennsylvania, took up their abode in the family of Rev. Dr. Kunze, the Lutheran scholar and divine. George Clymer and Henry Wynkoop were also among the Pennsylvania members. From New Hampshire, Nicholas Gilman, treasurer of the State, Samuel Livermore, and the clerical statesman, Abiel Foster, were prominent in the complicated business before the House.

Egbert Benson, who had participated largely in the various measures resulting in the establishment of a general government, was one of the leading New York members.[1] He was a pleasing speaker, and his personal popularity added weight to his arguments. His colleagues were

[1] Egbert Benson was one of the five commissioners appointed by New York to attend the Annapolis Convention in 1786, and the only one who accompanied Hamilton, and aided materially in securing the call of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 — not only in the incipient movement, but afterwards in Congress as a member from New York. He also supported the resolutions of Congress at a later date to transmit the Constitution to the action of the States; and in January, 1788, as a member of the New York Assembly, he introduced into that house the resolution to call a State convention to act upon the Constitution, which singularly enough was opposed by twenty-five out of fifty-two votes. He was one of the Congressional committee to receive Washington on his triumphal approach from Virginia; and chairman of the committee from the House to report on the "styles and titles of the presidential office." He was also chairman of the joint Congressional committee to arrange for the inauguration of Washington; and was associated with Madison, Clymer, Sherman, and others, in preparing the response to Washington's inaugural address. He was twelve years in Congress, and from 1794 to 1801 Judge of the Supreme Court of New York. He received many literary honors; and he was the first president of the New York Historical Society. At the time of the organization of the general government he was forty-three years of age. He was a bachelor, and resided with his brother, Robert Benson, corner of Nassau and Pine Streets.

Hosted by Google

John Lawrence, a man of fine address and marked influence, William Floyd, who signed the Declaration of Independence, Peter Sylvester, John Hathorn, and Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, afterwards lieutenant-governor of New York.

The New York senators were Philip Schuyler and Rufus King; from Massachusetts came Caleb Strong and Tristam Dalton; from Connecticut, Oliver Ellsworth and William Samuel Johnson; from New Hampshire John Langdon and Paine Wingate; from New Jersey, William Patterson and Jonathan Elmer; from Pennsylvania, Robert Morris and William Maclay; from Delaware, George Read and Richard Bassett; from Maryland, Charles Carroll and John Henry; from Virginia, Richard Henry Lee and William Grayson; from South Carolina, Ralph Izard and Pierce Butler; from Georgia, William Few and James Gunn; and from North Carolina, after the first session, Benjamin Hawkins and Samuel Johnston.

A violent illness confined the President to his house through the greater part of June and July. The anniversary of the Declaration of Independence was celebrated in the city with exceptional enthusiasm. The Society of the Cincinnati waited upon the President in the morning with a complimentary address, to which he responded in a few brief sentences. He was too feeble otherwise to do more than appear for a moment in the door of his mansion while the military companies of the city were passing, clad in the uniform worn during the Revolution. The Cincinnati, led by Baron Steuben, marched in procession to St. Paul's Chapel, where a great concourse of distinguished citizens and strangers were assembled to hear Alexander Hamilton deliver an oration on the life and public services of General Nathaniel Greene.

July 4.

It was a glowing tribute. "Did I possess the powers of oratory, I should with reluctance attempt to employ them upon the present occasion," said Hamilton, with impressive earnestness. "The native brilliancy of the diamond needs not the polish of art; the conspicuous features of pre-eminent merit need not the coloring pencil of imagination nor the florid decorations of rhetoric. The name of Greene will at once awaken in your minds the images of whatever is noble and estimable in human nature. In forming our estimate of his character we are not left to supposition and conjecture. We have a succession of deeds as glorious as they are unequivocal, to attest his greatness and perpetuate the honors of his name."

The President regretted being too ill to leave his house on this occasion. But Mrs. Washington, Mrs. Jay, Mrs. Hamilton, and Mrs. Adams graced St. Paul's with their presence; also many other ladies. The assemblage was pronounced the most brilliant ever seen in New York.

Hosted by Google

The mother of Washington died in August, at Fredericksburg, aged eighty-two, which affected him deeply. Prior to the close of the first session of the first Congress in September, a joint committee from the two houses requested him "to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, in acknowledgment of the signal blessings which had afforded the opportunity of peacefully establishing a constitution of government." He accordingly appointed the 26th of November. Aug. 25.

After the adjournment of Congress New York was for a few weeks comparatively quiet. Washington exercised daily on horseback, walked about the city at his pleasure, and drove every pleasant morning with Mrs. Washington and others, sometimes in the post-chaise and sometimes in the coach. His horses were numerous, and the finest the country produced. He drove four and not infrequently six before his carriage, with outriders in livery, the stylish establishment preceded usually by his two secretaries on horseback. He gave frequent dinners; on Thursday, October 1, the guests at his table were Postmaster-General Osgood and Mrs. Osgood, Colonel William and Lady Kitty Duer, James Madison, George Read, Colonel Bland, Mrs. Greene — the widow of General Nathaniel Greene — Lady Christiana Griffin and daughter, Miss Brown, Colonel Lewis Morris, and Mayor James Duane. Mrs. Washington received visitors as usual on the Friday following. On Saturday the President sat two hours to Madame de Brehan, who was painting his miniature profile — subsequently engraved in Paris. Oct. 1.

Washington records a conversation between himself and Hamilton on Monday the 5th, concerning a tour through the New England States; and on Wednesday a similar conversation with Jay, who signified hearty approval of the plan. The President also consulted both Hamilton and Jay the same afternoon in reference to the propriety of taking informal means of ascertaining the views of the British Court concerning the American posts still in their possession, and a commercial treaty. Hamilton thought Gouverneur Morris a fit person for the business. The next day Washington consulted Madison on both subjects, who saw no impropriety in the New England trip, but was dubious about the private agency to England. He thought if the necessity did not press, it would be better to wait the arrival of Jefferson. He feared that employing Morris would be a commitment for his employment as Minister, should one be sent to England, or wanted at Versailles in place of Jefferson. His opinions coincided with those of Hamilton and Jay in regard to the superior talents of Morris — but he thought with Jay that Morris's imagination sometimes outran his judgment. He said further "that the Oct. 5.

Hosted by Google

manners of Morris before he was well known created unfavorable opinions which he did not merit."

Madison took his leave; and an hour later Gardoqui, the Spanish Minister, called to say his adieus prior to embarking for Spain. That day at the President's dinner-table were the entire family of the Vice-President, including himself, wife, son, son-in-law, daughter, and niece; also Governor George Clinton and two daughters, Tristam Dalton and Mrs. Dalton, and Mr. and Mrs. Dubois. In the evening De Moustier and Madame de Brehan came in for an hour. De Moustier told Washington that he had received permission to return to his court.

On the 10th Washington, accompanied by Vice-President Adams, Governor Clinton, Ralph Izard, and Colonel Smith, the son-in-law of the Vice-President, visited Flushing to examine some fruit orchards and gardens, and on their return stopped at the country-seats of the General and Gouverneur Morris, in Morrisania, to view a barn which the latter had often described to the President as something novel, costly, and convenient. As they were returning leisurely through the little village of Harlem, they met Mrs. Washington in her carriage, with Mrs. Adams and her daughter, Mrs. Smith. They all alighted, and dined at a small tavern kept by Captain Marriner, who had been actively concerned in whale-boat warfare in the vicinity of New York during the Revolution. Four days later the President wrote letters to France, and while with Mrs. Washington on an informal visit to De Moustier and his sister, who were about to sail, placed them in the hands of the Minister. Washington also prepared letters the same day for Gouverneur Morris, requesting him as a private agent to sound the British Ministry.

The next day was Thursday. The President's proposed journey through New England having been generally esteemed advisable, he left the city in his own chariot, drawn by four Virginia bays, attended by his two secretaries, Tobias Lear and Major Jackson, on horseback in advance, and a retinue of six servants. Chief Justice Jay, Secretary Hamilton (of the Treasury), and Secretary Knox accompanied him some distance beyond the Harlem River.

Oct. 15.

Washington passed through Rye, Norwalk, Fairfield, and Stratford to New Haven, where he was welcomed by Governor Samuel Huntington, Lieutenant-Governor Oliver Wolcott, and the mayor of the city, Roger Sherman. At Wallingford the President saw the white mulberry growing to feed the silk-worm, and wrote of some fine silk thread, and of a sample of lustring which had been manufactured from the cocoon in that town. "This," he said, "except the weaving, is the work of private families, without interference with other business, and is

Hosted by Google

likely to turn out a beneficial amusement." In company with Oliver Ellsworth and others he visited the factories of Hartford. He took special note of all the industries and occupations of the people upon the whole route. He was pleased with the appearance of thrift and progress; and his conclusions were that the country was rapidly recovering from the ravages of war, and that the new government was generally approved. He avoided Rhode Island, as that State had not yet ratified the Constitution. North Carolina voted her own admission into the Union the same day that he returned to New York; Rhode Island yielded her scruples on the 29th of May following. His journey was a continuous triumphal march, unparalleled in history for its exhibition of love, gratitude, and reverence. Civil authorities, religious societies, literary institutions, and other bodies exhausted the vocabulary of praise in flattering addresses, and crowds sometimes followed him for miles.

During the absence of the President and of Congress, New York prepared for a gay winter. All the tradespeople were employed; house-renovating, house-building, horse-furnishing, house-adorning, and the production of personal outfits of exceptional costliness kept the wheels of industry rolling. It was necessary to provide for a larger population than at any previous period. The markets were enlarged and taverns and boarding-houses multiplied. Among other public improvements it was proposed to extend the sidewalks from Vesey Street to Murray Street upon the west side of Broadway, and although not completed until the next year, a similar foot-pavement — quite narrow — was laid along the Bridewell fence on the east side. Reade and Duane Streets were not opened until 1794; and the year 1797 came before an attempt was made to grade the hills on the Broadway road between Murray and Canal Streets, the highest point of which was in the neighborhood of Anthony Street.

The "Fresh Water Pond" still sparkled in the sunshine, a smooth, clear, beautiful, miniature inland sea, the locality of which may be significantly traced upon the map of Manhattan Island, on a former page. But it was too far out of town to be much noticed. At a club dinner in December some imaginative individual was very much ridiculed for suggesting the propriety of purchasing it, with the lands surrounding, for park purposes, and with a view to the future ornamentation of the prospective metropolis. Capitalists had no faith in any wild, visionary scheme of that character. New York would never in their judgment reach such a remote point of the compass. One of the springs which supplied the fabulously reported unfathomable depths of this remarkable lake bubbled forth near the present junction of Chatham and Roosevelt

Hosted by Google

